

NEUROSURGICAL ASSOCIATES, L.L.C

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DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING VP SHUNT PLACEMENT

You had a surgical procedure called VP shunt placement (V=Ventricle; P=Peritoneal). Your shunt has a valve or pump that looks and feels like a small lump under your scalp above your ear. Attached to either end of the pump is a tube. One piece of tubing goes into the fluid filled space in the brain (the ventricle) and drains cerebral spinal fluid (CSF) to the other end that drains into the abdomen (peritoneum).

These instructions provide additional information regarding your care at home.

Incision Care:

- You may shower with mild soap and shampoo daily starting 3 days after surgery. Gently wash your incisions and pat dry. This is the only time you may touch your incision.
- Do not apply ointments, lotions or creams to your incision.
- Do not use a hot tub, go swimming or take a bath until your incisions are completely healed (about 3 weeks for most people).
- Stop smoking as this delays healing and may cause a wound infection.
- Your abdominal incision was closed with absorbable sutures. Steri-strips were placed over the skin. They should remain in place for 1-2 weeks. The steri-strips should be removed after 1-2 weeks if they are still in place. The scalp staples should remain in place for 10-14 days. Call for an appointment for removal if one has not been already scheduled.

Activities:

- Start with light activity around the house for the first 3 days you are home.
- Gradually increase your activity starting with a short walk several times a day.
- No contact sports, skating, bike riding or other activities for 6 weeks
- Do not drive until cleared Dr. Wilkerson, which is about 3 or 4 weeks after surgery. You may not drive while taking pain medicines or other sedating medications.

Medications:

- Take your pain medications as prescribed and gradually decrease these as your pain improves.
- **Notes about pain medications and opioids (Norco, hydrocodone, oxycodone, Percocet, Dilaudid):** These medications can be habit forming and addicting, and can lead to overdose and possibly death. Do not combine these medications with alcohol, and if you take other sedating medications (muscle relaxers, antianxiety meds, for example) or have sleep apnea, take extra care while using these medicines. We will start decreasing your dose after a week or so, and will only be able to prescribe pain medications for a maximum of three months after surgery. After that time, you will need to contact your prior provider for assistance.

Follow Up:

- Call Dr. Wilkerson's office when you get home to schedule your follow-up appointment for staple/suture removal 10-14 days after surgery.
- Follow up with your Primary Care Physician for all medical issues.

Call your doctor if you experience any of the following:

- A **Fever above 100 F** or redness, swelling, odor or drainage at your incision site.
- Sleepiness or difficulty waking up.
- Nausea or vomiting that won't stop.
- Headache, especially if worse when standing up and better when lying down.
- Confusion or personality changes.
- Difficulty walking or moving your neck.
- Loss of bladder control.
- Any other questions or concerns.