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## When You Get Home: Thoroscopic Sympathectomy

**1. When to Call Your Doctor:** Call the office if you have: 1. **Severe** pain that is not relieved by your pain medication. 2. Your dressing should become *saturated with blood or drainage*. 3. *Temperature above 101°*. (If you have a low grade fever 99° to 101° please deep breath several times a day as well as drink plenty of fluids). 4. If you have severe headache, change in vision, nausea and vomiting or seizure.

**2. Wound Care:** Keep your incisions clean and dry. You may remove your dressing to shower and wash your hair. You may leave your incision open to air. There will be some swelling and redness around the incision. There may be a small amount of drainage.

**NO TUB BATHS, SOAKING OR SWIMMING FOR 3 WEEKS.**

**3. Pain control at Home:** You will have a prescription for pain medication to use as needed; the instructions will be on the bottle. Mild pain can be treated with Tylenol, please follow directions on the bottle, noting total use in 24 hours. Discomfort is normal while you gradually return to normal activity, but pain is a signal to stop what you are doing or proceed more slowly.

**4. Follow-up:** You will be seen in the office approximately 1 week after surgery. Your incision will be examined and sutures/ staples will be removed. Your 1<sup>st</sup> follow-up is usually with the Nurse Practitioner. This appointment time should be given to you upon discharge from the hospital. **If no appointment time is given, please call the office for an appointment.**

**5. Activity after surgery:** Typically, you will be weaker and tire more easily when you first come home from the hospital. You may not drive after surgery. Automobile travel should be limited to essential travel only for the first week. Do not lift anything greater than 10-15 pounds; do not do repetitive movements, engage in contact sports or vigorous physical activity until released to do so by the doctor. You may take short walks, gradually increase the distance as you tolerate (it is better to take several short walks than 1 long one). Sexual activity can normally be resumed 2-3 weeks after surgery in a position of comfort. *Return to work* and with what limitations will depend on what you do at work and how you feel. Physical therapy may be recommended; this is usually about 4-6 weeks after surgery.

**6. Medication:** You will take medications as directed when you get home. You will be given a list at the hospital. Normally you resume your pre operative medication plus may have addition medications.

**7. Diet:** You will need to increase your water, fluids and fiber. Pain medications and less than normal activity tend to cause constipation. You may take a mild laxative if needed.