Thoracic Surgery - Lung Resection Post-Op Instructions

Follow these instructions at home:

- You may resume a normal diet at home, ensuring it is well balanced with fruits and vegetables.
- Your incision will likely have glue, and you will typically have at least one non-absorbable suture.
  - The suture will be removed in the office during your first post-op visit.
  - You may shower washing over incisions lightly and pat incisions dry. You may place a gauze or band-aid over the chest tube site. Do not take baths, swim, or use a hot tub for at least 4 weeks.
- Walk in increments of 10-15 minutes 2-4 times a day, increasing activity by small amounts daily.
  - If you feel you are ready, try to add in stairs.
  - Increasing physical activity will aid in your recovery, and promote a faster recovery.
  - Increasing your activity with promote your lung recovery, and improve your exercise tolerance.
- Practice deep breathing/coughing and use the incentive spirometer 10x/hr. This will also allow your lungs to fully expand and critical to clearing any mucous build-up in your lungs.
  - Holding a pillow firmly over your ribs may help with the discomfort.
  - A dry cough after surgery is not uncommon after surgery.
- No lifting greater than 10-15lbs until seen in the office.
- No driving until your pain is under control without narcotic medication.
- Perform mobility exercises, such as arm circles 4x/day.

Pain Management:

- Please take Tylenol 975mg every 6 hours as instructed.
  - You may take Ibuprofen 600mg every 6 hours if permitted, alternating with tylenol.
    - Example: Tylenol dose at 6am, Ibuprofen dose at 9am, Tylenol dose at 12pm, Ibuprofen dose at 3pm, etc.
- Please make sure you are taking your Neurontin or Lyrica if prescribed.
- You may use aspercreme up to 3 times daily on the affected area if you experience numbness or burning sensations. This is a topical medication that may help relieve pain.
- Only use narcotic pain medication for pain that is not relieved by these other methods.
- Taking your medication as prescribed will keep pain under control so that you are able to ambulate, cough, and take deep breaths.

What to expect for your first post-op visit:

- You will need a chest-xray prior to the appointment.
- We will assess your pain control, your incisions, and ongoing restrictions/return to work.
- We will set up ongoing surveillance imaging if indicated.

Please call the office if you experience:

Dr. Katigbak & Dr. McKelvey (860-696-4306); Dr. Kachala (860-696-4923)

- Fever greater than 101°F.
- If you notice any redness, swelling, increasing pain, or abnormal drainage coming from your incisions.
- You cough up blood or pus, or develop a cough that produces bad-smelling sputum.
- Any pain or swelling in your legs.
- Increasing pain not controlled with medication.