

AFTERCARE FOLLOWING DRAINAGE OF AN ANAL ABSCESS

An anal abscess is a collection of infected material (pus) beneath the skin surrounding the anus. The skin overlying the area has been opened and the infected material drained. You now have an open wound because some skin was also removed. The wound should continue to drain the remainder of the infected material for the next few days.

DISCOMFORT

You will experience pain when the local anesthetic wears off. You may take the pain medication prescribed or acetaminophen (Tylenol). Avoid aspirin as this affects the blood's ability to clot and may delay healing. Continue any other medications as directed by your physician. Warm baths will also help relieve pain. During the healing process, it is normal to experience some discomfort when passing stools. You may also have a small amount of bleeding while passing stool.

WOUND CARE

Warm baths should be taken twice a day (minimum) beginning tomorrow. Do not sit in the water for longer than 15 minutes. Anal hygiene is important. Wash the area or sit in the tub after each bowel movement. Keep a dressing, preferably gauze, over the wound at all times. You can expect bloody discharge for 2 to days. It will take approximately 10 to 14 days for the skin wound to heal. You may have some discharge, bleeding or itching from the wound during this time. Do not be alarmed, as this is normal. If significant bleeding occurs, it is usually self-limited. It can be stopped by rolling up a washcloth, placing it over the area, and sitting on it to apply pressure to the wound.

ACTIVITY

Avoid strenuous activity for the next 12 hours to prevent undue bleeding. You may climb stairs, ride in a car, and walk. Do not drive a car while taking prescription pain medication.

DIET

A regular high fiber diet is recommended. Drink 6 to 8-ounce glasses of water each day. A stool-bulking agent such as Metamucil, Citrucel or Konsyl is recommended to keep your stool soft and moving daily. Take one teaspoon two times a day. Mix in 8 ounces of fluid (water or juice) and follow with another 8 ounces of fluid. A tablespoon of Milk of Magnesia may be needed to further soften your bowel movements, especially if you are taking prescription pain medication.

REASONS TO CONTACT THE PHYSICIAN

- 1) You have a temperature of 101 degrees Fahrenheit or greater.
- 2) You develop increased tenderness, redness, or discharge of pus from your anus.
- 3) You experience bleeding until the gauze dressing is saturated or bleeding into the toilet until the water is red.
- 4) You are unable to pass stools.

FOLLOW-UP

Follow-up visits are essential to ensure proper healing of your anal wounds. You should have made your follow-up appointment before leaving the office today.