Colorectal Surgery Recovery Pathway: 4-Day Hospital Stay

Surgery date: _____

Expected discharge date: _____

These are goals for your recovery. **Your recovery may not follow this pathway exactly.** Your care team will help you know what to expect. Read your surgery guide to learn more.

It's helpful to use your Goals to Discharge Checklist to track your recovery. We'll send the checklist to your MSK MyChart account. To learn more, read *Frequently Asked Questions About the Goals to Discharge Checklist*. You can find it at www.msk.org/pe/goals-discharge-checklist or ask for a printed copy.

The day of your surgery

What to do

- Use your incentive spirometer 10 times every hour you're awake.
- Do coughing and deep breathing exercises.
- Move from your bed to your chair. A staff member will help you.
- Walk with help from your physical therapist or nurse.

Tubes and drains to expect

- You may have an epidural catheter.
- You will have a urinary (Foley) catheter.

Medicines to expect

- Epidural or oral pain medicine, as needed.
- Nausea medicine, as needed.

What to eat and drink

- Follow a clear liquid diet.

1 day after your surgery

What to do

- Start planning your discharge with your caregiver and nurse or case manager.
- Use your incentive spirometer 10 times every hour you're awake.
- Do coughing and deep breathing exercises.
- Sit in your chair for longer than you did yesterday.
- Walk 4 or more times.

Tubes and drains to expect

- You may have an epidural catheter.
- You will have a urinary catheter.

Medicines to expect

- Some of your usual medicines. Your care team will give you more information.
- Epidural or oral pain medicine, as needed.

What to eat and drink

- Slowly start eating solid foods.

Notes _____

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

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2 days after your surgery

What to do

- Use your incentive spirometer 10 times every hour you're awake.
- Do coughing and deep breathing exercises.
- Walk more than you did yesterday.

Tubes and drains to expect

- You may have an epidural catheter.
- Your care team will take out your urinary catheter.

Medicines to expect

- Your usual medicines.
- Epidural or oral pain medicine, as needed.

What to eat and drink

- Eat solid foods.

3 days after your surgery

What to do

- Finish planning your discharge with your caregiver and nurse or case manager.
- Make sure you have a ride home.
- Use your incentive spirometer 10 times every hour you're awake.
- Do coughing and deep breathing exercises.
- Walk more than you did yesterday.

Tubes and drains to expect

- If you have an epidural catheter, your care team will take it out.

Medicines to expect

- Your usual medicines.
- Oral pain medicine, as needed.

What to eat and drink

- Eat solid foods.

4 days after your surgery (day of discharge)

What to do

- Plan to leave the hospital by 11 a.m.
- If your ride isn't ready when you're discharged, you may move to the discharge lounge while you wait. Ask your nurse for more information.
- Your nurse will give you discharge instructions and review your medicines with you.
- If a nurse will be visiting you at home, your case manager will give you information about the nursing agency.

Medicines to expect

- Your usual medicines.
- Your doctor will give you prescriptions for pain medicine and a stool softener.

What to eat and drink

- Follow your care team's instructions.

At home (after you're discharged)

- Follow the instructions in your surgery guide.
- Walk more than you did yesterday.
- It's normal to be more tired than usual.
- Do not drive until your doctor tells you it's OK.
- Do not lift more than 10 pounds (4.5 kilograms) for at least 6 weeks.
- Call your doctor's office if you have any questions or concerns.