Diet

- Start with clear liquids only today, to prevent nausea and constipation (soup, jell-o, juices, carbonated beverages, popsicles or water). Exception: When taking pain medication.

- Advance to your regular diet tomorrow. Eat lots of whole grains, green leafy vegetables, and fruits. Avoid dairy products.

Medications

- Take medications as ordered by your doctor.

- If antibiotics were prescribed, be certain to take them as instructed on the bottle.

- Take stool softeners as prescribed.

Activity

- Rest for the next 24 hours and then resume most normal activity as tolerated.

- Avoid any heavy lifting or strenuous activity for at least 5 - 7 days.

Dressing

- Remove dressing tomorrow

- Wear soft gauze or peri-pad in underwear for drainage control

- Change gauze or pad frequently

- You may have a drain in your rectum, do not pull on it; leave it alone until your clinic visit, unless otherwise instructed.

Bathing

- No restrictions – Sitz baths strongly advised (see description under special instructions section).

- You may use a handheld shower to wash the surgical site or wound.

Miscellaneous

- No alcohol or driving for 24 hours after surgery or while taking pain medicine.

- Do not make any personal or business decisions for 24 hours after surgery.

- You should have a responsible adult with you for the next 24 hours after surgery.
Anal Fistulotomy / Fistulectomy

Special Instructions

- Take a Sitz bath 3 times a day and after each bowel movement. Fill your bathtub with 6-8 inches of clean, warm water and sit in it for 20 minutes. This is extremely important for proper healing.

- It is important that you perform Kegel exercises while doing Sitz baths. This involves contracting the anorectal muscles and holding for 5 seconds. Repeat this maneuver for at least 3-5 minutes.

What to Expect

- You may have gas cramps and/or muscle spasms. While this is uncontrollable, it is normal.

- Do not fear bowel movements. Postponing it will only harden your stool.

- You may have some nausea, vomiting or dizziness after surgery but this should not persist.

- You may have a sore throat, if you had a general anesthetic.

- Bowel movement irregularity is expected with pain medication. It is important to take your stool softener.

- Some patients may have some leakage of soft or liquid stools but this is temporary and will be improved with doing the Kegel exercises described above.

Possible Problems

Call your doctor if you have:

- Excessive pain (pain medication may not completely eliminate discomfort).

- Excessive swelling and/or bleeding.

- Temperature above 101.5°F.

- Unable to urinate within 8 hours after surgery.

- Unable to drink liquids in the morning because of nausea and/or vomiting.
Anal Fistulotomy / Fistulectomy

To help prevent future problems

- Eat high fiber foods
- Drink plenty of water
- Get moderate exercise
- Develop good bowel habits
- Avoid foods that cause constipation such as dairy products, red meat, processed foods such as pizza, frozen dinners, pasta, and sugar products such as cakes, pies, pastries, doughnuts, and caffeine drinks.

Telephone numbers to Call with Problems or Questions

Surgery Clinic: Department 286
Mon–Fri, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
(408) 851-2000

Medical Offices Call Center (if clinic is not open)
Mon–Fri, Weekends and Holidays
(408) 554-9800

Emergency Department
Open 24 hours
(408) 851-5300

Anesthesia Service Line
Open 24 hours; your call will be returned within one business day.
(408) 851-6020

Follow-up Appointment

Name: Place:

Date: Time:

Return to Work: Medical Provider: