What to expect at home

Pain management
Follow the instructions given to you by your healthcare team for taking medicine. Some people go home taking over-the-counter medicine to manage pain, and some people go home with prescription medicine to manage pain. Your healthcare team will talk with you about what is best for you. There are other things you can do to manage pain like moving around, using an ice pack, deep breathing, and finding a distraction like music, TV and games. What works best is different for each person.

Incision care
• Wash the area gently with warm, soapy water every day in the shower.
• Pat the area dry with a clean towel.
• If your incision is draining, cover it with a dry gauze pad and medical tape or with an adhesive bandage.
• Once the incision is not draining, leave it uncovered.
• If you have strips of tape on the incision, leave the tape on until it falls off.
• If you have staples at the incision, they will be removed at your follow-up visit seven to 14 days after surgery.
• If you have clear surgical glue on your incision, it will fall off in 10 to 14 days.

Do NOT:
• Use hydrogen peroxide or alcohol on the incision.
• Soak in a bath or get in a pool until at least two weeks after surgery.
• Put ointments, creams or oils on the incision for six weeks.

Who and when to call for problems
Call your surgeon’s office for:
• Pain that is not getting better or gets worse
• Fever over 100.4°F
• Incision opens up or is bleeding
• Incision becomes redder, hard or has pus in it
• Signs of dehydration that do not get better by drinking water
• Increased blood in urine (slightly bloody urine can be normal after your procedure)
• Increased mucus or clumping (small amounts of mucus and/or clumps may be normal after your procedure)
• Urine (pee) is cloudy, bloody or smells very bad or has pus or clots
• Blood in stools more than three days after surgery
• Nausea or vomiting that does not stop

* Not getting better as expected
• If you have trouble with the urinary catheter (if you have one) or it falls out
• You have a stoma and:
  • You have signs of infection like red streaks or pus around your stoma
  • Your stoma turns pale or dark purple
  • You have increased mucus or clumping (small amounts of mucus and/or clumps may be normal after your procedure)
  • Your stoma weeps or bleeds
  • You have little or no urine going into the pouch
  • You are having trouble keeping your bag on

Call 911 for:
• Passing out
• Sudden chest pain
• Shortness of breath that is getting worse

Ostomy management
• Empty your bag before it is half full to lower the chance of infection and leakage.
• Change your pouch every three to seven days, unless it is burning, itching or leaking. Measure stoma with each change.
• Follow up with your home healthcare team if you have any trouble.
• Drink at least 8 to 10 glasses of liquids each day.
• Chew your food well.
What is a nephrectomy?  
A nephrectomy is a surgery to remove all or part of your kidney. A radical nephrectomy removes all of the kidney and sometimes additional parts.  
A partial nephrectomy is when the surgeon removes diseased parts of the kidney and leaves the healthy parts.

What is a cystectomy?  
A cystectomy is a surgery to remove the bladder.

What is a neobladder?  
A neobladder is made from a piece of your intestine.  
This will be done by making an ileal conduit or a conduit.  
Your doctor will make a new way to pass urine.

A stent is often placed in the ureters during surgery to protect the connection of the ureters to the healthy parts.

A cystectomy is a surgery to remove the bladder.  
What is a cystectomy?

A neobladder is a thin plastic tube you put into your urethra up to six inches.  
You need to use your stomach muscles to squeeze out the urine. If you cannot do this you may need to use a catheter to pass urine.  
A catheter is a thin plastic tube you put into your urethra up to six inches.  
A catheter will teach you how to care for your stoma.

About the urology system

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What is a neobladder?  
This is made from a piece of your intestine.

Get ready: Preparing for your surgery

Today

Drinking fluids, especially water, includes water, sports drinks, clear juice, coffee and tea without milk or cream, Popsicles®, Jell-O®, and the special pre-surgery drink.

Did you know?

Day before surgery

Bathing before surgery helps prevent infection after surgery.

Day after surgery and beyond

Resume: What to expect when going home

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