



Bowel Surgery: Discomforts and Complications

Postoperative discomfort	Cause	Treatment
Nausea	Usually related to general anesthesia	Medication – tell your nurse if you are feeling nauseous
Sore throat	Irritation from breathing tube placed during surgery	Lozenges, ice chips, gargle
Fatigue	Stress of surgery, hospitalization & anesthesia	Rest – tell your doctor or nurse if you are having difficulty sleeping
Shoulder pain	Gas used during laparoscopic surgery can irritate the diaphragm and result in shoulder pain.	Deep breathing, walking, time

Postoperative Complications	Symptoms	Cause	Frequency	Prevention	Treatment
Bleeding	Fatigue, blood at incision site	Surgery	Rare		Depending on blood levels, may require transfusion.
Wound Infection	Redness, pain, fever	Bacteria enters surgical site	Occasional		Antibiotic therapy, wound care.
Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)	Pain in leg	Pooling of blood	Rare	Walking, wear Venodyne boots, avoid smoking	Blood thinning medicine.
Pulmonary Complications	Wheezing, coughing, chest pain, fever	Lack of deep breathing after surgery, inhaling food or water	Occasional	Walking, use Incentive Spirometer, Splinting, avoid smoking	Encourage coughing & deep breathing, sometimes antibiotics are required.
Urinary Retention	Difficulty urinating	History of enlarged prostate	Rare		Fluids, re-insertion of Foley catheter, time
Urinary Tract Infection	Burning w/ urination, frequent urination, fever	Bacteria entering the urinary system	Occasional	Timely removal of Foley catheter	Antibiotics



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