

This document is meant to be a general educational resource for Dr. Tatem's patients undergoing varicocele surgery and its guidance will apply to most patients in most situations. If Dr. Tatem provides personalized instructions, please write these down on the bottom of this document and follow them.

Please read this document in its entirety as it will answer many common questions before and following varicocele surgery. An electronic copy of this document is available at Dr. Tatem's website, <https://indymenshealth.com/patient-information/>.

### A) Medications Following Surgery

- Our office will call in the medications you will need following surgery approximately 1 week before your surgery date. Please pick these up as soon as they are available and **bring them with you** on your surgery date so you can review them with Dr. Tatem.
- Depending on your insurance, the pharmacy may state that a 'prior authorization' is required prior to filling your prescription. **Our office does NOT submit prior authorizations for these medications.** If your pharmacy tells you this, please download the smartphone app 'GoodRx' ([www.goodrx.com](http://www.goodrx.com)) and use the provided coupon for an affordable cash price. Your pharmacy can help you with this process. You may need to ask your pharmacy to send the script to a different pharmacy to get the best price (Kroger is typically the cheapest).
- Dr. Tatem's office strongly believes in a **non-narcotic** approach to pain management following scrotal surgery. Narcotics (such as Norco or Percocet) can lead to constipation, breathing problems, and addiction.
- Fortunately, the medications you will be given (along with practical measures such as supportive underwear and intermittent icing) have been PROVEN to provide EXCELLENT pain relief!!
- If you still feel like your pain is poorly controlled despite practical measures and the below medications, please call our office and we will provide you with a script for a 'non-narcotic narcotic' known as tramadol (aka Ultram).
- You should have been provided prescriptions for 5 different medications to take following surgery. These are:
  1. Celecoxib 200 mg (aka Celebrex)
    - An anti-inflammatory to reduce post-operative discomfort.
    - Please take 1 capsule once daily following surgery. Can increase to twice daily if needed.

- This medication is very safe, but is processed by the kidneys. As such, **if you have any sort of medical kidney disease please let our office know.** A different medication may be provided.
- 2. Acetaminophen 500 mg (aka Tylenol)
  - Another anti-inflammatory to reduce post-operative discomfort.
  - Please take 2 tablets once every 6 hours following surgery.
  - Can use an over-the-counter formulation if more cost-effective.
- 3. Gabapentin 300 mg (aka Neurontin)
  - A pain medication specifically designed to address nerve pain.
  - Please take 1 capsule every 8 hours only AS NEEDED for pain.
  - Can make you drowsy. Please do not drive or operate heavy machinery if you take this medication.
- 4. Cephalexin 500 mg (aka Keflex)
  - Your post-operative antibiotic.
  - Please take 1 tablet twice daily for several days following surgery.
  - **This may reduce the chance of developing infection! It is very important that you not forget this medication and take it as prescribed.**
  - If you are allergic to cephalosporins, a different antibiotic will be prescribed.
- 5. Docusate sodium 100 mg (aka Colace)
  - A stool softener. Constipation is common after any type of surgery and can contribute to post-operative discomfort.
  - Please take 1 capsule twice daily as needed for constipation.
  - You should have 1-2 formed stool each day. Please stop taking this medication if you develop loose stools.

## **B) One Month Prior To Surgery**

- Please arrange to take off approximately 1 week from work following surgery. You will be able to return to work after this week, but should not lift anything heavier than 10 pounds until 2 weeks following surgery.
- If your job is physically demanding, you may need to request 'light duty' until 2 weeks following surgery. If your job is VERY physically demanding (this includes firemen and police officers) you will require 'light duty' until 4 weeks following surgery.
- If you have an unexpected circumstance arise, please call Dr. Tatem's surgery scheduler. Her extension can be reached by calling the clinic number at the top of the page.

### C) One Week Prior To Surgery

- Please make sure that you arrange for transportation to and from the hospital on your surgery day.
- Please make sure that you have picked up your medications and make sure to bring them with you on your surgery day. You should have 5 different medications.
- If you do not already own them, **please purchase a jock strap or tight fitting pair of underwear (baseball sliding shorts are excellent for this, <https://amzn.to/34H865Q>).** These can be purchased at the provided Amazon link or at any sports supply store. Please bring these with you on your surgery date.
- With the approval of your primary care physician and / or cardiologist:
  - **STOP ALL ASPIRIN CONTAINING MEDICATIONS** (ex. Anacin, Excedrin, Pepto-Bismol). Check any cold or pain medication bottles to make certain they do not contain aspirin.
  - **STOP ANY BLOOD THINNING MEDICATIONS SUCH AS: WARFARIN, COUMADIN, PAVIX, XARELTO, ELIQUIS, BRILINTA, OR EFFIENT.** Some patients may remain on blood thinners if mandated by another physician, but this **MUST** be discussed with Dr. Tatem explicitly prior to proceeding with surgery.

### D) The Day Before Surgery

- **DO NOT EAT OR DRINK ANYTHING AFTER MIDNIGHT THE DAY BEFORE YOUR SURGERY.** If you need to take any medications, please do so with a small sip of water.
- Please make sure you have the following items ready to bring with you to the hospital:
  1. Your medications (there should be 5)
  2. A pair of tight-fitting underwear
  3. A pair of LOOSE-fitting clothing. Pajama pants with a comfortable t-shirt are a good option.
  4. Your insurance card and personal identification
- **If possible, please try to shave your genitals, groin and pubic region the night before surgery with shaving cream. The razors used in the OR can cause significant itching after surgery and shaving yourself in the shower can reduce this.**

### E) The Day Of Surgery!!

- Please arrive at the hospital at least 2 hours prior to your scheduled surgery start time.
- Bring with you the previously mentioned 4 items.
- After registration, you will be taken to the pre-operative area and asked to change into a gown. Please remove all of your clothing prior to putting on your gown.

- You will be given some of the same oral medications you were prescribed prior to surgery. This will reduce your discomfort immediately following surgery.
- Dr. Tatem will meet you in the pre-operative area to complete some final paperwork and give you the opportunity to ask any final questions prior to surgery.
- For the first 24 hours following surgery, please refrain from making important decisions, driving, or drinking alcohol.
- When you get home, please drink plenty of water. If you are hungry, please start with clear liquids (sports drinks are great for this) and light foods such as jello or crackers. Avoid greasy or heavy foods.
- You may take your gabapentin or acetaminophen as needed for pain. Start your antibiotic and daily dose of your celecoxib the following morning. Please start taking your docusate the evening of surgery.

## **F) Recovery Prior To Your 2 Week Post-Op Appointment**

- Please take your medications as prescribed. If you feel like your pain is not adequately addressed, please call our office at (317) 564-5104.
- You may notice some swelling or black and blue bruising. This is very common and is almost never a reason to worry. It may even increase slightly over the next several days but will start to resolve before your 2-week post-op appointment.
- You are free to take a shower 48 hours after your surgery. Please use sponge baths until this time.
- Do NOT take any baths or submerge your skin opening under water for at least 1 month following surgery.
- Your skin opening is closed with dissolvable stitches and glue. Please do not pick at it as the glue will flake off with time. Playing with your incision may increase your risk of infection. When you're allowed to shower, let water gently wash over this area. Do NOT scrub the area and please pat dry lightly.
- Please avoid lifting anything heavier than 10 pounds for the first 2 weeks following surgery. You may return to work as previously instructed.
- When making clothing choices, please remember that belts are not your friend following varicocele surgery as they frequently rest on top of the incision. Elastic waistbands or suspenders are frequently more comfortable. Please wear the supportive underwear that you purchased prior to surgery as much as possible.
- Please take your antibiotic as prescribed. This is very important. Please take your pain medication and stool softener as prescribed.

- Please abstain from all sexual contact until after your 2-week appointment. This includes masturbation.
- If you are experiencing significant itching following surgery, it is permissible to use an over-the-counter topical hydrocortisone cream on affected areas EXCEPT FOR THE INCISION. Please do not apply any creams or ointments to the incision or stitches under any circumstances.

### **G) Your 2 Week Post-Op Appointment**

- Usually, most of the pain and swelling is gone. Your skin-opening should be well-healed, but the tissue surrounding it may be slightly and puffy. This will feel like a ‘healing ridge.’ This is normal.

### **H) When To Call The Office Or Go To The Emergency Room**

- Fortunately, complications with varicocele surgery in our practice are extremely rare. That being said, keep an eye out for the following signs and symptoms. We are always happy to see our post-operative patients on a same day basis if you have any concerns about your surgery.
- Although your local Emergency Room may be closer, if you are feeling well enough to see us in the clinic, we always prefer to evaluate our patients ‘in-person’.
- When in doubt, come see Dr. Tatem in clinic.
- Concerning symptoms include:
  - Fevers over 101 F (38.3 C) with shaking and chills.
  - Having pain that is not controlled with your pain medication.
  - Increasing redness or pus from your incision.
  - Increasing pain and swelling in the scrotum larger than a golf ball.
  - Any allergic reaction to your prescribed medications such as hives, rash, nausea, or vomiting.

**Thank you for taking the time to read this important information! More information, including instructional videos and a copy of this document, can be found on Dr. Tatem’s personal website at [www.alexatatemmd.com](http://www.alexatatemmd.com) and our practice website [www.indymenshealth.com](http://www.indymenshealth.com). You can always call our clinic at (317) 564-5104.**

**Personalized Instructions:** \_\_\_\_\_

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