



## HOME CARE AFTER A VENTRICULOPERITONEAL SHUNT

The patient will usually stay in the hospital for one to two days after surgery. This depends on the patient's preoperative status and recovery.

The stitches or staples will be removed five to ten days after surgery. A bandage may be kept on the back and abdominal incisions to keep any clothes from rubbing or "catching" on the staples. An appointment will be made for suture/staple removal at the doctor's office before leaving the hospital.

After removing the bandages, a shower and shampoo may be taken. Be sure to dry the incision areas thoroughly. Apply a clean bandage if desired.

The recovery rate depends on each individual patient. This is the process when one works to become well. It requires gradual but persistent effort to increase physical strengths and minimize weaknesses. Concentrate on improvement and think positive!

Follow-up appointments will depend on status and recovery. A CT scan or Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) test may be ordered to assess the shunt function or ventricle sizes.

If the shunt stops working, a variety of symptoms may be noted:

1. The same symptoms as before the shunt insertion
2. Drowsiness
3. Extreme irritability
4. Unusual headaches
5. Increasing trouble with walking/steadiness
6. Coma

Should any of these symptoms arise, please call the office for instructions or take the patient to the Emergency Room. The office answering service will contact the doctor if the call is after the office is closed or over a weekend.

Signs of infection are:

1. Redness and swelling of the incisional areas (it is normal to have some redness around the suture or staple area. This will disappear after their removal).
2. Fever
3. Yellow drainage
4. Increasing incisional tenderness