

Preparing for a Hemorrhoidectomy

All the things I wish my doctors office had told me before I had the surgery!

In fact, I called and asked the doctors office multiple times for information and all they would tell me is that they'd give it to me at discharge. This was NOT helpful for me since: (1) at discharge I'd be woozy from the anesthesia and forget everything; (2) I live alone and didn't have someone who could just run out and get me stuff; and (3) as someone with cognitive challenges from 3 head injuries, I don't do last minute well - I need information in advance so I can work with it and prepare.

In spite of explaining this to the doctor's office on several occasions, they still wouldn't help me. So I re-read parts of my book (*Successful Surgery and Healing: A practical guide for patients, caregivers and advocates*), searched online and watched some disturbing scary videos. I've compiled the results below. Hope you find it helpful!

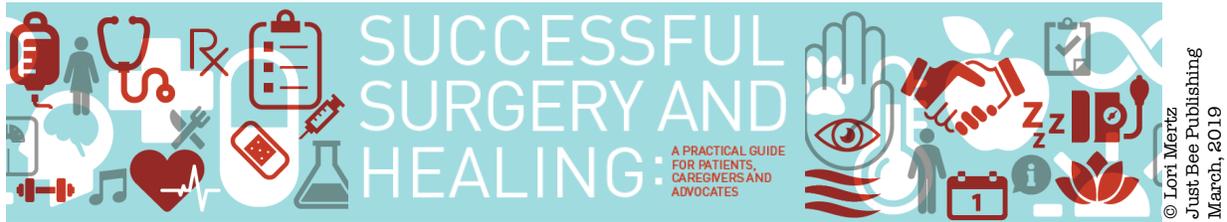
I also made my own - not terrifying - video you can view on my website (LORIMERTZ.COM/ADDTL-SURGERY-SUPPORT-DOCS.HTML), Surgery and Recovery Facebook page (FACEBOOK.COM/SURGERYANDRECOVERY) and YouTube (YOUTU.BE/IMOZEDNPHBS). Here's to making lemonade for the next person undergoing hemorrhoid surgery!

Things you may want to purchase ahead of time:

- ♥ Disposable underwear or sanitary napkins. Why? You will bleed following bowel movements and likely weep in between as the wounds heal - about two weeks.
- ♥ Soft bathroom wet wipes. Your bum is going to be super tender for a while. I prefer unscented natural wipes and never flush them (even if it says you can) as it destroys plumbing.
- ♥ Stool softeners. Preventing and avoiding constipation are super important!! Note: If you get constipated, start with stool softeners before high fiber supplements or laxatives - it's important to get moving before adding bulk. I prefer to start more naturally with high doses of magnesium. I like Magnesium Calcium + by Rainbow Light. Two to three tablets at bedtime for me will generate a looser stool by the next morning. Magnesium can also be good for calming and relaxing.
- ♥ Bottled water with a flip sport cap - easier to drink from when you're laying down. I also like electrolyte water, at least right after surgery when hydration is crucial.
- ♥ Sitz baths. I was told to take 2+ sitz baths a day following surgery for pain management. What I wish they'd told me is that **MORE IMPORTANTLY** sits baths are: (1) for hygiene; (2) infection prevention; and (3) healing. Sitting in a bath multiple times a day keeps the surgery site moist while it heals. Additionally, your bum will be painful after surgery and the surgical wounds exposed. Wiping after a bowel movement won't be fun or easy. Boy I really wish my doctor's office had explained this to me!
- ♥ Healthy foods to stock the refrigerator and freezer. Ingredients to make soups, vegetables and fruits, eggs, cottage cheese, other foods high in fiber (passing hard stools is no bueno after anal surgery!). Bananas, apple sauce, toast, noodles, rice, you get the gist - soft, easy to digest foods.

Diet ideas for recovery:

- ♥ Soup! Make soups; purchase and drink broths. I like Miso Ginger broth from Trader Joe's.
- ♥ Scrambled eggs. I like to add sautéed onions and cheese.
- ♥ Chia and hemp seed porridge. Good for you and easy to make. 1-2 T chia seeds, 1-2 T hemp seeds. Cover in boiling water and let soak a few minutes. Once water is absorbed and mix is your desired thickness add fresh fruit (blueberries are good) and some plain whole yogurt. Stir and eat. You can also add coconut milk or whey protein powder. Play with it.



- ♥ Noodles with butter; mashed potatoes; toast; rice. These are all simple carbs that are easy to digest. Noodles and butter are a comfort food for me.
- ♥ Chopped salads. I started eating salad on the third day post-op. I kept it simple and included lots of avocado. I also mix in cottage cheese for extra protein. For dressing I use organic olive oil and Bragg's Apple Cider Vinegar.
- ♥ Protein smoothies. Experiment with ingredients. Here's what I like:
 - Vanilla whey protein powder
 - Frozen fruit. Sometimes I use blueberries, but after surgery I like pineapple which is loaded with nutrients, healthy antioxidants and the digestive enzyme bromelain which also has anti-inflammatory properties
 - Ginger which known to help ease nausea and vomiting after surgery, tastes great and blends well with pineapple
 - Chia seeds which are an excellent source of fiber, protein, omega-3 fatty acids and other nutrients
 - Avocado. Sounds weird, but it adds healthy fat for relieving constipation, is high in potassium, fiber, antioxidants and other vitamins and nutrients and make a smoothie really creamy
 - ¼ t of Pure Radiance Vitamin C powder from The Synergy Company
 - 1 T of Pure Synergy Superfood from The Synergy Company
 - Plain whole milk yogurt (Greek, goat, you choose)
 - 1/3 can organic coconut milk. Buy the full fat kind – it's the good fat in coconut milk you want!
 - And some liquid such as water, kombucha, milk, 7-Up if you want it a little sweeter, other..

The day and night before surgery:

- ♥ I ate lightly the day before surgery. I avoided meats and heavy, constipating, filling foods. Instead I had soup and a small salad. I included a whole avocado – good fat – which is known to aid in the prevention of constipation.
- ♥ I drank extra water so as to be really hydrated – again to help prevent likely constipation which would be painful to manage after hemorrhoid surgery. (Drink lotsa water after surgery too!)
- ♥ The night before surgery I took both magnesium supplements and a stool softener to prepare for my first post-surgery bowel movement. I was really scared of the pain and knew I may be taking pain medication known to cause constipation. Anesthesia also can cause constipation since it puts the bowels (along with the rest of your body) to sleep. Constipation is something to be super aware of. Prevention is the best medicine!
- ♥ Since lifting following surgery is unadvised and bending might be hard or painful, in the kitchen I got pots and pans I might use out of cupboards and put them on the stove. I put the blender on the counter and arranged my refrigerator accordingly. In the bedroom and bathroom I put items I might want on top of counters and dressers for easy access. In the bathroom I put wipes, pads and extra toilet paper within easy reach of the toilet.
- ♥ To avoid unnecessary potentially painful moving around I set up areas where I knew I'd be spending time with items I might need such as water, phone, phone charger, pen and paper, TV changer, book, pain medication, etc.
- ♥ Since sitting may prove painful for possibly several weeks, I created an area where I could stand and work at my computer. In one room I stacked some boxes and reams of paper and in another room I had a rolling stand that a friend lent me. Both worked really well.

**It will take time to heal, so be patient. You can do it.
I wish you the very best of luck!!**