

The Big Hurt: Broken Sutures and Blood

After having beat the storm home, after being discharged by Sanford Med in Fargo, I was full of excitement at the thought of being pile-free with no more posterior problems.

I was given no instructions to avoid breaking my sutures; however, and in the rush of Friday afternoon check out, the protocol for avoiding that was omitted. And that knowledge should have been absolutely given before anyone ever turned me loose –i.e. explaining the proper diet and physical restrictions!

I pretty much resumed normal diet, which included several foods I needed to avoid, namely foods that constipate: starchy, white-flour breads, sugary food, white rice, processed junk food and many others. The result turned out to be a disaster. Seven days later my stitches broke and I was rushed to the Sanford emergency room by Amy Jorgenson, a friend and first rate medical technician and her driver on a Saturday night. The operation did not get performed until Sunday 6pm. But that bleed needed attention STAT!

In the next 24 hours I endured the scariest night of my life. And but for great nursing and divine intervention, plus quick and efficient bleed response by way of transfusions, I know now that without Jesus, and great nurses I would certainly have died.

Life Saving Info on Post-Op Recovery

I recently got released from a hospital hell week I could have avoided had I been sufficiently warned about the real dangers awaiting anyone who is not drilled until he *gets it* about what to do or not do when you go home from the very dangerous operation called hemorrhoid removal.

When I was sent home from the first surgery, after an over-night recovery stay at Sanford hospital, it was on a Friday and everyone including me was anxious to go home and enjoy real life again. I was told that I could be released as soon as I could urinate again, and at 3 p.m. I did, thanks to a cheering squad of young nurses. It took three hours of hopeful encouragement and my falling back on an old boy scout camp trick of holding my hand under warm running water. The gusher came and we all joyously headed home to Wahpeton. We got there just before dark, but in the rush, a vital step was forgotten, post operative dietary orientation. I needed to know how truly perilous it is not to know that the sutures I was given were made in tissue “as delicate as thin packing foam.”

Thus one’s diet must have no constipating food, because straining or bulky stools can rupture those sutures. This was brought home to me before my second discharge by a play-acting group consisting of a gruff scout mistress and four little girl scouts. The theme of their play was *even diarrhea is better than death*. I’ve been on that diet now for three weeks and have three more to go before the sutures are absorbed and I can resume as somewhat normal diet.

My diet now is much like the Seven Day Adventist’s diet --mostly vegetables. All my favorites like ice cream, cheese, sweets, and cervelat are verboten. I also learned that I needed weeks of physical therapy to rebuild muscle strength.

So in closing let me say that the Biblical scripture “My people die for lack of knowledge” is true indeed.

Gene Pinkney for the Daily News 23-02-08-