

What To Expect After Robotic Prostatectomy

On the day of your robotic surgery, you will be in the surgery suite for approximately 4 hours. Once in the surgery suite, in addition to your surgeon, an anesthesiologist, nurse anesthetist, registered nurse, surgical technologist and either a nurse practitioner or first assistant will care for you. All of the staff in the robotics suite have advanced training in robotic surgery. Some of the time in the surgery suite will be spent positioning you and measuring sites for the skin incisions. Proper placement of the incisions is important to the overall ease of the robotic surgery. After surgery, you will note purple ink marks on your abdomen, marking the site of the incisions, along with location of your prostate gland.

After surgery, you can expect to spend 60-90 minutes in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (recovery room) where you will be monitored by a registered nurse who has advanced training in post anesthetic care. You will be given pain medication and your vital signs will be closely monitored before you are transferred to the nursing unit. You may experience some abdominal pain at the incision sites and an urge to urinate, as you will have a catheter in your bladder. Although you will feel an urge to urinate, your bladder will be steadily draining, due to the catheter.

Once on the nursing unit, your vital signs will be taken as you arrive and every four hours thereafter until the following morning. If you are hungry after surgery, you may have a small meal. You may drink as much fluid as you wish. If you wish to walk, you may do so, with the assistance of the staff on the nursing unit. The following morning, you may have whatever you would like to eat for breakfast.

You can expect to remain in the hospital for 24-36 hours after surgery. Generally, in order to leave the hospital, your vital signs, such as temperature and blood pressure will need to be within normal limits, we will need to know that you have good pain control, your urine will need to be either pink or yellow (not red), you will need to eat a regular diet or diabetic diet, you will need to be able to get up and walk without balance problems, pass gas and if you have a drain in your abdomen, it will probably be removed before you leave.

You will leave the hospital with a urinary catheter in place. You will have the catheter for 7-21 days. **Only your surgeon will remove your catheter.** The nursing staff will show you how to care for your catheter and give you written instructions for catheter care. You may use Bacitracin ointment at the urinary meatus-the opening of the penis-if the catheter begins to irritate your urethra.

Once home, you will have a few limitations:

- 1) You may not drive a car, lawn mower, golf cart or farm equipment
- 2) You may not lift more than 10 pounds
- 3) You may not take a bath, swim or sit in a hot tub
- 4) No sexual activity

These restrictions will be in place until your surgeon tells you otherwise.

Once home, you may resume your regular diet, take a shower, climb stairs, walk, be a passenger in a car and other non-strenuous activities. You will be off from work for 2-8 weeks, depending on your profession, your overall health and any other factors regarding your prostate removal surgery.

You will see your surgeon in the office for a follow-up visit about a week after your surgery. Your surgeon will do an examination; discuss your pathology report and take an x-ray of your abdomen to see if your catheter can be removed. Once your catheter is removed, you may lift up to 20 pounds and, with your surgeon's permission, you may drive, take a bath and swim.

You will see your surgeon approximately 5-6 weeks after surgery for another follow-up visit. Although every surgery is unique, you may have lifting restrictions removed at that point and may return to work and daily activities.