Carotid Endarterectomy (CEA) Discharge Instructions

1. You will be discharged from the hospital with a neck incision approximately 3 inches in length. The sutures in place under the skin will dissolve on their own. Prior to discharge please look at the incision in the mirror as so that you can assess for any changes daily at home.

2. The first night home you should sleep with your head slightly elevated (~2 pillows) as this will lessen any neck swelling.

3. Take prescribed pain medications as ordered so that you are comfortable.

4. Please keep incision clean and dry. You may start showering (no baths until the incision is healed) the first day after discharge. (for men: please shave around the incision and not over the incision)

5. You may experience tiredness and slight dizziness as well as mild swelling or numbness around incision and ear lobe. These symptoms are normal. Your incision may feel thickened, and raised for a period of time. This will decrease over time. It takes 2-3 weeks for the swelling to go away.

6. Avoid heavy lifting (nothing over 5 lbs., example a gallon of milk) until your first post operative visit.

7. Your first post operative visit is usually scheduled 1 to 4 weeks after discharge. If you have not received your discharge appointment please call the “CVC Call Center” at 1-888-287-1082 and they will help you with your appointment.

8. The timing of returning to work should be discussed between you and your surgeon at the time of your discharge or at the first post operative visit.

9. Please call one of the numbers below if you experience a fever higher than 101.5, excessive redness extending beyond the incision, drainage from incision (bright red blood more than 1 teaspoon or thick yellow color, i.e. pus), weakness or numbness of arm or leg, change in visions, severe headache, or difficulty speaking.


After business hour 5PM call the paging operator 734-936-6267 and ask for the Vascular Surgery Resident on-call.