

SITZ BATH INSTRUCTIONS

Sitz baths are highly recommended because the warm water helps soothe and relax the anal sphincter. This will alleviate any pressure and itching sensation. It will also keep the area clean.

HOW TO PERFORM

- **Bath Tub** - If you're taking a sitz bath in the bathtub, make sure that the bath tub is clean.
 - Fill the tub with 3 to 4 inches of water. The water should be warm, but not too hot.
 - Sit inside the tub and soak your perineum for 15 to 20 minutes.
 - After getting out of the bathtub, gently pat yourself dry with a clean cotton towel. Don't rub or scrub the perineum, as this may cause pain and irritation. Replace the dressing as needed.
- **Plastic Kit** - A plastic sitz bath kit fits over the toilet. The basin can be filled with warm water and is available in most big-box stores and pharmacies. Rinse the bath kit with clean water before using it. Then, add warm (but not hot) water.
 - Place the sitz bath into the open toilet. Test it by trying to move it side-to-side to ensure it will stay in place and won't shift. You can pour warm water in before you sit down, or you can use the plastic bag and tubing to fill the tub with water after you've sat down. The water should be deep enough so that it covers your perineum. Soak for 15 to 20 minutes.
 - If you used the plastic bag, you can add warm water as the original water cools. Most sitz baths have a vent that prevents water from overflowing. The water conveniently overflows into the toilet and can be flushed.
 - When you're finished, stand up and pat the area dry with a clean cotton towel. Avoid rubbing or scrubbing.
 - Give the basin a proper cleaning after every use.
 - * **IMPORTANT ADVICE:** Make sure you measure your toilet seat size before buying the item, to get the right fit. If you have a standard oval or round shaped toilet you should be able to make it fit.

MEDICATIONS

- There is no absolute requirement to add anything to the water, and there is no real evidence to suggest putting in a specific ingredient (or combination of ingredients) will make your sitz bath hemorrhoid treatment more effective.

HOW OFTEN

- If sitz baths bring you relief, we recommend taking three or four per day until the source of the itching, irritation, or pain is healed.
- Sit for 15-20 minutes each time.

Some patients also find application of an ice pack to be helpful.

- *Do this only for brief periods of time (10 to 15 minutes) three to four times daily for the first few days after the surgery*

The office is open for phone calls from 8-5 pm Monday-Thursday, Friday 8-4 pm. For after hours, call the Medical Exchange @ 314-364-5262 to speak to the surgeon on call.