Discharge Instructions for VP Shunt Patients

You had a surgical procedure called a VP shunt placement (Ventriculoperitoneal). Your shunt has a valve or pump which looks and feels like a small lump under your scalp above your ear. Attached to either end of the pump is a tube. One piece of tubing goes into the fluid filled space in the brain (the ventricle) and drains cerebral spinal fluid (CSF) to the other end that drains into the abdomen (peritoneum). These instructions provide additional information regarding your care at home.

Incision Care
- You may shower with mild soap and shampoo daily. Gently wash your incision and pat dry. This is the only time you may touch your incision.
- Do not apply ointments, lotions, or creams to your incision.
- Do not use a hot tub, go swimming, or take a bath until your incisions are completely healed (about 4 weeks for most people).
- Stop smoking, as this delays healing and may cause an infection.

Activity
- Start with light activity around the house for the first 3 days you are home.
- Gradually increase your activity starting with short walks 1-2 times per day.
- Avoid contact sports, skating, bike riding, or other such activities for 6 weeks.
- You may not drive until cleared by your neurosurgeon.

Nutrition
- Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables to prevent constipation.

Medications
- Take your medications as prescribed and gradually decrease pain medications as your pain improves.

Follow-up
- If you have not already been scheduled for a follow-up appointment, call your neurosurgeon when you get home to schedule your follow-up appointment.
- Follow up with your primary care physician for all medical issues.

Call your doctor or return to the emergency room if you experience any of the following symptoms:
- A fever above 100 degrees F
- Sleepiness or difficulty waking up
- Nausea or vomiting that won’t stop
- Headache, especially if worse when standing up and better when lying down
- Confusion or personality changes
- Loss of bowel/bladder control
- Difficulty walking or moving your neck
- Any other questions or concerns