Follow up appointments are essential to ensure the wound is healing normally. The doctor will tell you how soon they need to see you back for the first follow up appointment. You will receive a call from a nurse 1 business day after your surgery to answer any questions you might have. After 4:30pm for urgent issues contact (703) 280-2841 to reach the on call physician.

- After surgery, take it easy for the rest of the day.

- You will be given a prescription for pain medication. Follow the directions given by your doctor for taking this medication. To avoid upset stomach, take your pain medication as prescribed with food in your stomach. If the drugs do not seem to be working, consult your physician. Do not share these or any other prescription drugs with others because the drug may have a completely different effect on the person for whom it was not prescribed.

Some people experience drowsiness, dizziness, lightheadedness, or a false sense of well-being after taking opioid analgesics. Anyone who takes these drugs should not drive, use machines, or do anything else that might be dangerous until they know how the drug affects them. Nausea and vomiting are common side effects, especially when first beginning to take the medicine. If these symptoms do not go away after the first few doses, check with the physician who prescribed the medicine. Side effects may include: dizziness, lightheadedness, nausea, sedation, vomiting, if these side effects occur, it may help if you lie down after taking the medication.

- Don’t drive while you are taking narcotic pain medication.
- Don’t lift anything heavier than 15 pounds until your doctor says it’s okay.
- Don’t do strenuous activities until your doctor says it’s okay.
- You may walk indoors, outdoors, up and down stairs.
- Expect to be off from work/school for at least one to two weeks following this surgery. Your surgeon will give you more guidance on return to normal activities.
- Avoid constipation:
  - Eat fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
  - Drink 6–8 glasses of water a day, unless otherwise instructed.
  - Use a fiber supplement and a stool softener twice a day. This is particularly true while taking narcotic pain medications.
Wound Care:

- Leave the dressing from surgery in place until the morning after surgery.
- Caring for this open wound properly is essential for wound healing and to decrease recurrence of the cyst. Because of the difficulty seeing the wound, it is best to have assistance when changing the dressing.
- Take pain medication prior to dressing change as this can be painful.

**The basic principle is to shower the wound twice a day and reinsert fresh gauze in the wound after each shower:**

1. Remove the tape and outer dressing from the wound, get in the shower and allow the rest of the dressing that is packed in the wound to be soaked with water and then pull it out. When the dressing is removed, you may see a small amount of bleeding; this is normal.
2. Vigorously irrigate your wound in the shower for 5-10 minutes, using a hand-held shower head. Aim showerhead directly at the wound. Bending forward helps open the wound. Let the water clean the area thoroughly:
3. Wrap a thin, clean wash cloth or plain 4x4 cotton gauze, around your finger and clean gently, but thoroughly, the inner surface of the wound, removing any surface covering to expose clean, healthy pink tissue. Don't scrub.
4. After shower, pat the skin around the wound edges dry.
5. The repacking of the wound is what usually requires help from another person. Wash hands. You may use gloves, but this is not necessary.
6. Moisten a fresh, 4x4 inch plain cotton gauze with tap water. Squeeze out excess water (dressing should be damp, not wet).
7. Pack the wound gently but not tightly with the moist gauze. Use a Q-tip or your finger to ensure that the gauze reaches the bottom of the wound and place it so that all inner wound surfaces are in contact with the moist gauze.
8. Cover with a dry outer dressing and secure with tape or elastic bandage; dispose of the old dressing.
9. As your wound heals, it will close from the bottom and sides, and you will need less and less gauze to pack it.
10. Shave the skin at least 2 inches around the wound at least once weekly. Use adhesive tape to pick up loose hair.