

Discharge Instructions for Laparoscopic Surgery

General Instructions



You should be up and about freely. Gradually increase your activities.

You are allowed to climb stairs but try not to become too tired.



Avoid lifting anything greater than 15 pounds. Avoid strenuous exercise or sports for 2 weeks.



Do not drive until you can do so without discomfort and without using pain medicine. This can take 3-7 days.



You may shower and wash your hair. Water can run off your incisions. Pat dry.



Nothing inside the vagina, including no intercourse, douching, or tampons for 1 week. It can be normal to have a slight vaginal discharge, which may be bloody. Use sanitary pads, not tampons. **If you experience bleeding heavier than a period, call the office.**



You may eat and drink as tolerated. Go easy at first, with clear liquids, soup or broth, crackers the day you are sent home before progressing to most solid foods.



Increase fiber and fluids if you get constipated. If needed a stool softener, Surfak, Colace, or a generic equivalent may be purchased and taken by mouth as directed. It



is common for the pain medicine to cause constipation. If no bowel movement has occurred for 2-3 days, you may use MiraLAX, Milk of Magnesia, or Senokot. Do not use Correctol or Ex-lax.



If you get an anti-nausea skin patch, keep it on until the day after surgery. After peeling it off, make sure to wash your hands before you accidentally rub your eyes,



as this may cause your pupils to become dilated for a few days, making it hard to read or focus on objects up close.

A Catheter was likely placed in your bladder during surgery. Because of this, emptying your bladder for the first 1-2 days after surgery may burn or feel mildly uncomfortable, this is normal.

When To Call?

Contact the office right away if you experience the following:



You have a fever higher than 101 °F or higher, chills, nausea unrelieved by nausea medication such as Zofran or the anti-nausea patch.



Vomiting, or pain unrelieved by using 2 pain pills every 3-4 hours.



Vaginal bleeding heavier than a period, or foul-smelling vaginal discharge.



You bleed or soak through 2 maxi pads per hour.

Urinary frequency, urgency, or burning which doesn't respond to increasing fluids, cranberry juice, and non-prescription bladder medicine such as pyridium.



Chest pain, shortness of breath, pain in the calves or legs.

Separation of the incisions.

Inability to empty your bladder.

Pain Medications



Non-steroidal Anti-Inflammatory (NSAID) medications for the first 5-7 days on a schedule whether you have pain or not with a little bit of food or milk.



Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, etc.) 400mg (2 tablets) every 4 hours **or** 600mg (3 tablets) every 6 hours **or** 800mg (4 tablets) every 8 hours. **Instead of Ibuprofen** you may take Naproxen (Aleve) 550mg (2 tablets) every 8 hours.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol) regular strength (325mg per tablet) 650mg (2 tablets) every 4 hours **or** 975 mg (3 tablets) every 6 hours.



Instead of the regular strength Tylenol, you may take extra strength Tylenol (500mg per tablet) every 3 hours **or** 1000mg (2 tablets) every 6 hours.

You may alternate the Tylenol and Motrin instead of taking them at the same time to get better coverage for your pain.



For more severe pain, use the Oxycodone ½ or 1-2 tablets every 3-4 hours. You cannot become addicted to pain medicine with the usual length of usage (3-5 days). It is far more effective to take the pain medicine as soon as you feel pain returning rather than waiting until it is unbearable and then trying to control the pain.

Follow Up



Any tissue removed will be tested and looked at under the microscope to make sure you do not need any other treatments after your surgery. These results generally take a week, and you will be called with the results from your surgeon's office. Please let us know if it is ok to leave a detailed message regarding these results.



If an appointment has not been scheduled for you, call the office and tell them the date of your surgery and which procedure you had, and they will schedule the follow up visit.



Your surgeon will usually take pictures during your surgery. If these were given to you or your family members on the day of your surgery and you wish to review them with your surgeon, please bring your copy with you to this appointment.

Answers To Frequently Asked Questions



There may be a small amount of bloody fluid coming from the incision sites and this is O.K. There may also be some black and blue discoloration surrounding the incisions. This will resolve on its own. You may get the glue covering your incisions wet, but please just pat them dry during the first 2 weeks. After this, you may peel off and remove the glue.



Under each incision you may feel hardness. This is the normal process of healing and represents scar tissue which will soften over time.

Don't worry about straining to go to the bathroom or performing routine activity. These activities should not cause any harm. Remember, use common sense and let your pain limit your activity.

You may experience shoulder or rib cage pain, especially on the right side. This is due to diaphragm irritation caused by CO₂ (carbon dioxide) gas used for laparoscopic surgeries. It will resolve within 1-2 days.



It is common to feel pain in a variety of locations. This is usually mild and most likely due to your position on the operating table.

A sore throat is common after general anesthesia and will resolve on its own. Over-the-counter pain remedies may help.



Some strong pain medication may cause nausea and constipation. For nausea, try to reduce the amount of Percocet or Hydrocodone and avoid taking them on an empty stomach. For constipation try a fiber laxative such as Citrucel, Benefiber, or MiraLAX. These can be obtained without a prescription. If no relief call the office.



After surgery, you'll spend a few hours in the recovery room. Most women go home the same day and recover at home in their own beds.

Your incisions will be covered with bandages, and there will be stitches or glue inside your skin that will dissolve on their own.

Your incisions may be numb for a while after surgery, and medication will be provided to help relieve your pain.



You may be surprised at how soon you will be urged to get up and walk –first with help, and then by yourself. Walking can lower your risk of blood clots and breathing problems. It also helps your bowels recover. In a procedure like this where most women go home the same day, walking is even more important. The length of time you will need to recover varies, but for most women it takes 2-4 weeks.