



COURI CENTER

— for Gynecology and Integrative Women's Health —

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Post-Operative Instructions for Laparoscopic Hysterectomy

Pain Control

You may feel some chest, shoulder or abdominal discomfort for a few days. This discomfort is a result of the gas that was introduced in the abdomen during surgery. Your body will absorb this gas after about 24 hours. For relief, you may apply heat to your abdomen or lay flat.

It is important to take a stool softener, such as Colace, while taking narcotic pain medication such as Percocet or Vicodin. Plan ahead by purchasing a stool softener before your surgery.

You may take “over the counter” pain relievers that do not contain aspirin such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil). Do not exceed the daily recommended dose.

Note: If the pain is not relieved by pain medication, becomes worse or you have difficulty breathing, call your physician.

Incision Care

Check your incisions daily.

A small amount of blood or clear drainage from the incisions is normal and not a cause for concern.

Your incisions may be itchy for a few days. This is part of the normal healing process.

As your incisions heal, they will change in color and may become numb for several weeks.

If you have small dressings, they may be removed in 24 hours.

If you have steri-strips (small adhesive strips) in place, they will peel and fall off. If they do not fall off in 10 days, carefully peel them off.

If you have stitches, they do not need to be removed, they will dissolve on their own.

Note: If you notice any redness, swelling, heavy drainage or bleeding, call your physician.

Nutrition

You may eat whatever you want.

Drink 6-8 glasses of water daily.

Bowel Function

For the first several days after surgery, the bowel is usually less active. You may not have a regular bowel movement right away depending on pre-op bowel prep or pain medication use.

Percocet, Vicodin, Tylenol #3 or any other narcotic pain medication will increase constipation.

Regular bowel movements may be less frequent.

If constipation should occur:

Drink more fluids

Continue to take a stool softener until constipation resolves.

Add fruit and bran to your diet.

Take a mild laxative such as Milk of Magnesia.

Activity

It is normal to feel tired for a few days after surgery. Listen to your body and do not overdo it.

Walking is encouraged immediately after surgery, as tolerated.

No strenuous activities such as heavy lifting (greater than 10 pounds or a gallon of milk), pushing or pulling for 4-6 weeks.

Do not drive while taking prescription pain medication or if your level of discomfort will inhibit your ability to operate a motor vehicle safely.

You may return to work and do routine exercise after 2-4 weeks. Recovery times vary from patient to patient. Your doctor will make recommendations based on your specific case.

You may shower the day after surgery. Pat incisions dry. Do not rub incisions with washcloth or towel. Keep your belly button as dry as possible.

You may take a bath after six weeks. You must also wait six weeks to go into a swimming pool, hot tub or the ocean.

Vaginal Bleeding

Light vaginal bleeding or spotting for up to a week is common.

Note: If you have heavy, bright red vaginal bleeding, call your physician. Bleeding that fills a pad in one hour is considered heavy bleeding. Sexual Intercourse

Avoid placing anything in the vagina for **12 weeks** (i.e. tampons, douching, sexual intercourse).

If you had a supracervical hysterectomy (the cervix was not removed during surgery) you may have intercourse once you have seen your doctor for the post-operative visit.

Follow-up Appointment

You should have a follow-up post-operative appointment in 4-6 weeks.

If you do not already have an appointment, please call the office to schedule one. Our phone number is (309) 692-6838

Call The Office If You Are Experiencing:

A fever higher than 100.4 degrees F.

Increasing pain not controlled by pain medication.

Inability to eat or drink without vomiting

Redness & tenderness at the incision site or a large amount of drainage.

Heavy, bright red vaginal bleeding or foul smelling discharge. You can expect to have a small amount of reddish-brown colored discharge for up to 1-2 weeks. Do not be alarmed by this.

Office Telephone Number is (309) 692-6838