

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAJOR SURGERY

ACTIVITY

- 1) Do plan to “take it easy “for the first week after surgery. Spend a lot of time resting. You should be able to do simple household task and walk a moderate pace. You may climb stairs slowly. **DO NOT** lift heavy objects or do excessive bending or pulling. Avoid activities like gardening, laundry, vacuuming, and shopping that require lifting or prolonged standing. Let your body be your guide – if it hurts do not do it.
- 2) **DO NOT** exercise, other than walking until you have seen your physician.
- 3) **DO NOT** use tampons, douche, or have sexual intercourse.
- 4) **DO NOT** drive for 3 weeks following surgery.
- 5) Do continue your TED hose, if given them for the first 5 days. You may take them off to shower.
They can be washed by hand.
- 6) Do use the Incentive Spirometer, if given one, for the first 5 days, at least 4 times a day for 10 breaths each.
- 7) Do take showers only for the first week. After that you may have a tub bath. Be careful of getting in and out of the tub. You may wash your hair.

DIET

Do drink plenty of water and other fluids. You may not be very hungry, but stay well hydrated. Avoid carbonated drinks during the first week, as they may make gas pains worse. Stay on a soft bland diet for the first few days (soup, noodles, grits, cereal, cooked vegetables) until your bowels are back to normal. Avoid crunch foods, roughage, and spicy foods the first week. Constipation and bloating are common during the first few weeks. It is okay to use a stool softener like Colace or Dulcolax.

WOUND CARE

If you have an abdominal incision, wash with soap and water. Steri Strips may be removed after 5 days. Non tender swelling a a raised appearance of your incision are normal and will improve with time. Wear loose clothing and leave the incision open to the air when possible, otherwise, keep the area clean and dry. Gauze may be placed in the skin fold to help keep it dry. If you incision pulls apart, begins draining pus, or becomes very red and hot to the touch, please call the office at once.

Vaginal spotting frequently occurs after surgery and should become scanty and brown within 2 weeks. Infrequent spotting with a brown or yellow strong smelling discharge can be normal during healing up until 6 weeks. If you had a myomectomy, your bleeding may be more like a light period off and on for up to 4 weeks.

BLADDER SURGERY PATIENTS

When you are in the hospital, a catheter will be used to drain your bladder for a short time after surgery. Your catheter will be removed and we will make sure you can empty your bladder before you go home. It is important not to strain when you try to empty. Your nurse will measure how much you void, and will use a catheter or ultrasound to check how much is in your bladder. When you are able to empty without much left inside, that tells us your bladder is working fine and you will not need a catheter to go home.

A few patients will need to go home with a catheter. If you do, it will usually be removed within a few days. You will be given instructions on when to return to the office for removal.

FOLLOW-UP

- 1) Do make an appointment to see your doctor 3 weeks after surgery
- 2) Pain medications or other prescriptions will be given by your doctor. Do call during office hours, if refills are needed. Pain medications cannot be refilled by the on call doctor.
- 3) Do call the office for any of the following problems:
 - Vomiting or rigid abdomen
 - Pain or burning urination, or inability to empty your bladder
 - Your incision splits open, oozes pus, or becomes hot/red to touch
 - Fever greater than 101 degrees
 - Excessive vaginal bleeding (soaking a maxi pad in 1 hour)
 - Severe pain unrelieved by medication
- 4) Please make sure any insurance medical leave, disability forms are submitted to our office at once, as they take some time for adequate processing

We wish you a speedy and a healthy recovery! Let us know if we can help you.