



## COMPREHENSIVE WOMEN'S HEALTH

Building healthy relationships.

# Postoperative Instructions For Minor Surgery

There are a few things to be aware of in the early days after minor surgery. This handout will be a general guide for you, and your doctor's nurse will be calling to talk with you during the first week after your procedure. If you have concerns or questions at any point, please feel free to call our office between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm at (352) 332-7222 or 333-5555. If you have an urgent problem after hours, you may call the same number and speak with the doctor on call.

You may be surprised at how tired you feel after your surgery. This is partly due to anesthesia, but also because your body is working hard to heal itself. It is best to avoid any tiring activities for the first week or two after surgery, but gently increasing your activities by taking walks and slowly building back to your normal activity will actually shorten the recovery period. You should be able to return to your normal diet by the day after your surgery.

Patients who have had laparoscopic surgery often find that resting in bed is somewhat more uncomfortable than sitting up due to the presence of carbon dioxide gas that was used to inflate the abdominal cavity. It is impossible to completely remove all of the gas at the end of the procedure, and what is left tends to settle under the diaphragm and can create sharp pains that may radiate into the shoulders and neck for the first and possibly the second post-op day.

Tricks to help with "gas pains" are: resting in a semi-sitting position (in a recliner chair or propped up with pillows), and taking frequent short walks around the house. Warm tea or coffee can help stimulate the bowels to eliminate any intestinal gas that may also create discomfort. It is best to avoid bubbly sodas as well as drinking from a straw for the first 3 days post-op. Gas problems usually resolve within 48 hours. Your doctor will provide you with pain medication to use in the first few days after your procedure.

Care of your small abdominal incision(s) will be easy. You will most likely leave the hospital with a Band-Aid covering your abdominal incision, and possibly any other tiny incisions on your abdomen. Leave the Band-Aid(s) in place the first day, but gently remove them when you take your first shower. As you can imagine, drying the inside of your navel can be tricky after showering, but it's actually very easy to simply point a hair dryer at the incision(s) on the low-warm setting for a minute or so. You needn't apply any antibiotic ointments or other bandages to your incisions after the first day, but you may wish to lightly cover the sutures with a Telfa pad for comfort when wearing clothes that may rub against the area.

Some bruising may be noticed in the first few days after surgery and this is not a concern. You should call our office if you notice increasing abdominal pain or distention, difficulty emptying your bowels or bladder, drainage from the incision(s), or have a temperature of  $>100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$ .

Your doctor will want to see you again in the office approximately 1-2 weeks after your surgery, and the hospital nurses may make this appointment for you before you go home. Your doctor's office nurse will be sure that this appointment has been made and will answer any questions you may have when she calls to check on you during the week after your surgery.