

POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS:

LAPAROSCOPIC/VAGINAL HYSTERECTOMY

1. The recommendations that follow are intended as a general guide for your first weeks at home. However, the most important thing is to use good common sense in planning your activities: if it hurts, don't do it; and, don't do anything to the point of exhaustion. If you do too much one day you will pay for it the next.
2. Incisions (if you have them) require no special care. You may shower or bathe as you choose. The stitches which are under the skin will dissolve on their own.
3. You may climb stairs but try to plan your day so that you are not running up and down several times a day.
4. You may drive in one (1) week if you feel up to it, can tolerate the seatbelt, and do not require pain medicine beforehand. You may be a passenger in the car at anytime so long as you can tolerate the seatbelt.
5. The only activities that should be strictly avoided are heavy lifting and strenuous physical exercise for 4 weeks and intercourse for 6 weeks.
6. It is normal to have some vaginal bleeding/discharge for several weeks until the stitches at the top of the vagina have dissolved and the tissue has healed. After the first week you may use a gentle vinegar and water douche as often as every other day as needed for the discharge if you feel comfortable doing so.
7. You will receive prescriptions for pain and other possible needs usually at your pre-op visit. If you have any problems with the medications, please contact us.
8. Constipation is often a problem after any major surgery. If you have not had a bowel movement on your own within 2-3 days of surgery, we recommend using a Fleets enema. Although unpleasant to do, it will provide much more rapid result than a laxative by mouth. An over-the-counter stool softener (colace, surfak, or doxidan) is also recommended on a nightly basis for several weeks if you have had any vaginal or bladder repair work done.
9. If your ovaries have been removed you will receive either an estrogen patch or shot immediately after surgery. When you are seen at your post-op visit you will receive further instructions concerning your estrogen therapy.
10. If you have had a bladder repair, it may take several weeks for your bladder function to return to normal. If you are discharged with a catheter in place you will be given special instructions about its care and when to return for its removal. Also, after bladder repair surgery you may not lift more than ten pounds for the first twelve weeks.

11. Most people experience a “letdown” at some point after they go home. This is a minor form of “battle fatigue” – a delayed reaction to the stress of surgery. It usually passes in a day or two. Especially in the beginning, there will be good and bad days, so it is important not to be discouraged by this. After a couple of weeks, you will generally feel good and up to doing most things. However, you will still tire easily which can be frustrating. Remember that this too shall pass.
12. If you have not done so prior to surgery, please call the office to schedule a post-op visit for two weeks after your procedure.
13. If you have any questions or problems, please do not hesitate to contact the office or the on-call physician at 972-772-4015.