

Post Operative Instructions for Laparoscopic Hysterectomy

You had a laparoscopic hysterectomy. This is surgery done through an incisions in your belly and one in the vagina. It may take a few weeks or longer to heal from the surgery. This sheet gives instructions on how to care for yourself once you are home.

Medications

Take all medications on schedule and as directed by your doctor. You may be prescribed pain medication. Do not wait until your pain becomes severe before taking the medication. It may not work as well if you wait too long to take it between doses.

Diet

If you have constipation, your doctor may tell you to add more fiber to your diet. You may also be told to use a laxative or stool softener. These can often be bought over the counter. Drink plenty of fluids.

Activity

Rest as often as needed.

You may shower when you get home. Hold off on taking baths for at least 2 weeks. Have someone nearby in case you need help.

Ask your family and friends to help with chores and errands.

Don't mow the lawn, vacuum, or do any strenuous activities for 4-6 weeks.

Avoid lifting anything over 10 pounds or repetitive bending/stooping over for 4-6 weeks.

Avoid driving for two weeks or longer if you are still taking narcotic pain meds

Do not place anything in the vagina until you are cleared by your doctor. No sex, douching, tampons, fingers..!

Walk as often as you feel able.

Do the coughing and breathing exercises you were taught in the hospital. If you were given an incentive spirometer to help with breathing, use it as directed.

Ask your doctor when you can return to work.

Incision Care

Keep your incision clean and dry. It's okay to wash the skin around your incision with mild soap and water.

If you have a dressing over your incision, change it as you were told. Replace the dressing if it becomes wet or dirty. In most cases, the dressing can be removed after 48 hours.

Don't sit in a bathtub, pool, or hot tub until your incision is closed and any drains are removed.

When coughing or sneezing, hold a pillow firmly against your incision with both hands. This is called "splinting." Doing this helps protect your incision.

Avoid picking, scratching, or pulling at your incision.

Don't use oils, lotions, or creams on your incision.

Follow-Up

You will have one or more follow-up visits with your doctor. These are needed to check how well you are healing. Your drain, stitches, or staples (if applicable) may also be removed during these visits.

When to Call the Doctor

Call your doctor right away if you have any of the following:

Fever of 100.4°F or higher

Chest pain or trouble breathing

Pain or tenderness in the leg

Increased pain, redness, swelling, bleeding, or foul-smelling drainage at the incision site;
incision separates or comes apart
Problems with the drain if you have one
Pain or hardness in your abdomen that gets worse or isn't relieved by pain medication
Nausea and vomiting that won't go away
Diarrhea that lasts more than 3 days
Constipation or inability to pass gas for more than 3 days
Dark-colored or bloody urine
Bright red or dark black stools
Itchy, swollen skin; skin rash