



UNIVERSITY OF
LOUISVILLE

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

FEMALE PELVIC MEDICINE AND RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

The staff at the University Continence Center is committed to ensuring that your post-operative experience is as comfortable as possible. Please do not hesitate to call the office for any questions after recovery. Any questions regarding your surgery or post-operative recovery should be directed to the staff at the University Continence Center rather than your Primary Care Physician. The following information will help answer the frequently asked questions and will help you understand some of the common experiences that may occur after your surgery.

What should I expect immediately after surgery?

- Take it easy for the first few weeks after surgery; you may need assistance the first few days.
- You may walk as much as you like and go up and down stairs, although in the beginning you may need to take one step at a time.
- You can return to work 4 – 6 weeks after surgery depending on your requirements for lifting and standing. Avoid heavy lifting (more than 10 lbs) until you are comfortable. After 6 weeks, you may do anything that is comfortable to you.
- You may drive your car as soon as you feel ready, but not while you are taking narcotic medication. Intercourse should be avoided for a minimum of 4 weeks.
- Incisions for laparoscopy are usually 1/4 to 1/2 inch in size. You may have 2 to 3 small incisions with one larger 3/4 inch incision OR you may only have 3 to 4 small incisions. The incisions will have absorbent sutures, steri-strips and band-aids. The band-aids may be removed the next day. The steri-strips can be kept on until they curl at the edges. The sutures will absorb by themselves. If your skin is closed with staples they must be removed 7 to 10 days after surgery. Call the office to schedule an appointment for this procedure.
- Shower as usual. Avoid tub baths for 4 weeks. Keep the incision area clean and dry.
- You may notice a foul smelling discharge or drainage.
- Use maxi pads – not tampons - to absorb blood or discharge. Avoid douching. You may notice vaginal spotting for up to 6 weeks.
- You will be given a prescription for pain medications before leaving the hospital. Follow the instructions on the prescription. You may use a heating pad on your abdomen to relieve gas pain.
- Constipation can cause severe pain that can get worse with increased amounts of medication. If you experience constipation, drink lots of fluid and eat a high fiber diet. You may also use a mild laxative, such as Milk of Magnesia, or a stool softener, such as Colace®. No prescription is required for either.

Notify our office if any of the following occurs:

- Increased pain, redness, or swelling at the incision.
- Pain or burning with urination.
- Vaginal bleeding that soaks more than 1 maxi pad per hour.
- Fever greater than 101°F
- Persistent nausea, vomiting or inability to have bowel movements.
- Shortness of breath, calf pain, or swelling in your extremities.

Please call the office to schedule your post-operative visit for about 6 weeks after your surgery.

If you leave the hospital with a bladder catheter in place call the office to schedule an appointment to take place **1 week** after your surgery.

You may resume normal activities as soon as you feel able to do so. You should feel progressively stronger each day.

Please call with any questions or concerns.

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