

**VAGINAL HYSTERECTOMY, LAPAROSCOPIC-ASSISTED VAGINAL HYSTERECTOMY, TOTAL
LAPAROSCOPIC HYSTERECTOMY
Postoperative Discharge Instructions**

Laparoscopy

If laparoscopy was used to facilitate your hysterectomy, you may have several small incisions on your abdomen. These small abdominal incisions may have thin sutures that will dissolve over the next several weeks. The incisions may also be covered with surgical glue or surgical adhesive tape that may stay on the skin for several days or weeks. You may shower 24 hours after surgery unless you have been instructed otherwise. Please observe the incisions for redness, swelling, increasing tenderness, drainage, or discharge. If any of these occur or if you develop fever or worsening abdominal pain, please call us.

General Activity

In general, it will take approximately two to six weeks for you to return to "normal". There will still be significant healing beyond that time, but most will be within the first six weeks. You should take it easy for the first 24 hours. You can expect to be somewhat groggy and tired from the general anesthesia and you will need extra rest. You may increase your activity gradually as tolerated. You may go up and down stairs at your normal pace if it is comfortable. You should avoid intercourse, baths, and swimming for the first six weeks following surgery unless your physician has instructed you otherwise. You should also avoid heavy lifting (greater than 20 pounds) for the first six weeks. You may drive a car with power steering when you are completely comfortable doing all the movements and functions required to safely drive a car. You should also be off pain medication. Other normal daily activities may be resumed as tolerated. These include climbing stairs, showering, short walks, and returning to work. Some patients may take longer to fully recuperate and your return to normal activity level should be individualized as to how you are feeling and are recuperating.

Diet

By the time you are discharged from the hospital, you may resume your usual diet as tolerated. Do not push yourself to eat if you are not feeling up to it for the first few days. Advance your diet as tolerated.

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Medications

You may resume your normal preoperative medications as directed. In addition, you may take a prescription pain medication as directed if one was prescribed for you, or you may take over-the-counter pain medication such as Tylenol or ibuprofen as directed for pain. If hormone replacement therapy is planned, your physician will discuss the specific medications and dosages with you.

Removal of Ovaries

If you are postmenopausal and your ovaries were removed, you are unlikely to have additional menopausal symptoms. If you are pre-menopausal and your ovaries were removed, you may experience menopausal symptoms such as hot flashes and may be a candidate for estrogen replacement therapy. This should be discussed with your physician on an individual basis.

Bladder Catheter

If you had bladder surgery at the time of your abdominal surgery, you may be going home with the catheter in your bladder. Catheter care and bladder training will be discussed with you on an individual basis by your physician.

Miscellaneous

You are likely to have a small amount of bloody discharge or drainage from your vagina. YOU should wear a sanitary pad or liner for this drainage. **Do not use tampons.** If your bleeding is heavier than a heavy period, please call us. Gas pains after abdominal surgery are normal, but they may produce strong cramps. Walking may alleviate the gas pains and can help move the gas in the intestines so you can pass it. If you do not have a bowel movement by the fifth day after surgery, please call us.

Follow-up

A follow-up visit should be scheduled approximately two to three weeks after your procedure to check your incisions as well as the healing process. In addition, your physician may review your surgery in greater detail as well as the operative findings and any management plans that may be necessary. You may also have additional follow-up visits.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call our office Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at 314-432-8181, or after hours and on weekends through our exchange at 314-388-6555.