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Discharge Instructions for Laparoscopic or Vaginal Hysterectomy

- You should be up and about freely. Gradually increase your activities.
- You are allowed to climb stairs, but try not to become too tired.
- Avoid lifting anything greater than 30 pounds. Avoid strenuous exercise or sports for 2 weeks.
- Do not drive until you can do so without discomfort and without using pain medicine. This can take from 3 to 7 days.
- You may shower and wash your hair. You may tub bathe after 24 hours.
- No intercourse, douching, or tampons for 4 weeks. It can be normal to have a slight vaginal discharge, which may be bloody. Use sanitary pads, not tampons. If you experience bleeding heavier than a period, call the office.
- You may eat and drink as tolerated. Go easy at first, with clear liquids, soup or broth, crackers, before progressing to solids.
- Increase fiber and fluids if you get constipated. If needed a stool softener, Surfak, Colace, or a generic equivalent maybe purchased and taken by mouth as directed. It is common for the pain medicine to cause constipation. If no bowel movement has occurred for 2-3 days, you may use Miralax, Milk of Magnesia, or Senokot. Do not use Correctol or Ex-Lax.
- Keep the anti-nausea skin patch on until the day after surgery. After peeling it off, make sure to wash your hands before you accidentally rub your eyes, as this may cause your pupils to become dilated for a few days, making it hard to read or focus on objects up close.

Precautions

- Contact the office if you experience fever of 101 or higher, chills, nausea unrelieved by the Zofran, vomiting, pain unrelieved by using 2 pain pills every 3-4 hours, vaginal bleeding heavier than a period, or foul smelling discharge.
- Contact the office if you experience any urinary frequency, urgency, or burning which doesn't respond to increasing fluids, cranberry juice, and non-prescription bladder medicine such as AZO.
- Contact the office if you have any chest pain, shortness of breath, pain in the calves or legs, or redness, drainage, or separation of the incisions.

Medications

- For mild pain, use ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, Nuprin, etc.) 400 mg (2 tablets) every 4 hours or 600 mg (3 tablets) every 6 hours or naproxen (Aleve) 550 mg (2 tablets) every 6-8 hours. Take these with food.
- For more severe pain, use the Percocet 1-2 tablets every 3-4 hours. You cannot become addicted to pain medicine with the usual length of usage (3-5 days). It is far more effective to take the pain medicine as soon as you feel pain returning rather than waiting until it is unbearable and then trying to control the pain.
- One Percocet can be taken with one ibuprofen or one naproxen.

Follow Up

- If an appointment has not been scheduled for you, call the office and tell them the date of your surgery and which procedure you had and they will schedule the follow up visit. You will have a pelvic examination at that visit.
- If you have a procedure where photos can be taken, and you wish to have copies of these, please provide us with a valid email address at the time you sign your consent form.
- We will send you a link where you may view or download your pictures.

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

- There may be a small amount of bloody fluid coming from the incision sites and this is O.K. There may also be some black and blue discoloration surrounding the incisions. This will resolve on its own.
- Under each incision you may feel hardness. This is the normal process of healing and represents scar tissue which will soften over time.
- Don't worry about straining to go to the bathroom or performing routine activity. These activities should not cause any harm. Remember, use common sense and let your pain limit your activity.
- You may experience shoulder or rib cage pain, especially on the right side. This is due to diaphragm irritation caused by CO₂ gas used for laparoscopic procedures. It will resolve within 1-2 days.
- It is common to feel pain in a variety of locations. This is usually mild and most likely due to your position on the operating table.
- A sore throat is common after general anesthesia and will resolve on its own. Over-the-counter pain remedies may help.
- Pain medication may cause nausea and constipation. For nausea, try to reduce the amount of Percocet and avoid taking on an empty stomach. For constipation try a fiber laxative such as Citrucel, Benefiber, or Miralax. These can be obtained without a prescription. If no relief call the office.