

Patient's Instructions

Hysterectomy Post-Operative Instructions

General

If you are having a Laparoscopic Hysterectomy or Vaginal Hysterectomy you can expect to go home later in the day of surgery or spend one night in the hospital. Your doctor will routinely see you the morning after surgery within 24 hours of your procedure and you will be "discharged" to leave sometime that day.

If you are having an Abdominal Hysterectomy you can expect to spend 2 nights in the hospital.

Both of these projected hospital stays are dependent on your ability to urinate, have some bowel function (Tolerate Some Food), and obtain relief with oral pain medicine.

The night of surgery you will be gotten out of bed, but will have an I.V. line for fluid replacement and pain medicine, and possibly a catheter in your bladder. The next day the I.V and catheter will be removed, and you will be ambulating, getting out of bed to the bathroom, and showering.

Driving

We suggest that you do not plan on driving until you can control your vehicle and especially while taking narcotic pain relievers.

Activity

At home we encourage you to "take what your body will give you". You may go up and down stairs (a rough guideline is to limit your "round-trips" to 2 a day for the first week), take a tub bath or shower, and do what's necessary to take care of yourself (though nobody else) for the first week or so. Gradually increase your activity daily, especially walking. Our guideline is to wait 3 weeks following surgery before "strenuous" activity, meaning straining that will cause your face to flush for an extended time.

Pain

You will be prescribed oral pain medicine, usually a narcotic/acetaminophen (Tylenol®) combination. Additionally you may take Ibuprofen over-the-counter 3-4 tablets 3-4 times daily. This can reduce the amount of narcotic pain medicine you need to take. Each

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prescription tablet will contain 325 or 500 mg of acetaminophen, and that number will be on the prescription label. You can also take acetaminophen alone. If you have pain unrelieved by these measures call the office.

Nausea

Occasionally people require medicine for nausea relief when they go home. If so, we will prescribe something.

Incisions

Most of the time you will have absorbable sutures under the skin which do not need to be removed. You may also have Dermabond, similar to "super glue" applied, which will gradually come off. Occasionally we use skin staples for wound closure, and these will need removal in approximately one week.

Bowels

Usually passing gas from below is a condition for discharge. After surgery it is extremely important that you do not get constipated. The single major thing that makes people feel well after surgery is resumption of bowel function. We encourage you to have adequate to extra fluid and fiber intake. Products such as Metamucil, Citrucel, Benefiber, etc. taken on a routine basis, 2-3 times a day until bowel movements become regular and normal, can help you recover more quickly. Surgery and narcotics both contribute to constipation. It is important, however, to take adequate pain relief since pain can also inhibit your ability to relax and have bowel movements more easily. Early discharge from the hospital also facilitates return to normal bowel function since most people more easily relax in the familiarity of their own home.

Bladder

You should be emptying your bladder normally when discharged. In the rare instances when you are discharged with a catheter we will instruct you on how and when to remove it. If unable to void, call the office.

Bleeding

You will probably have some slight bloody discharge that will gradually become white/yellow vaginal discharge, usually still be present at your Post-Op visit. Any bleeding should always be less than a "normal" menstrual period. You may have a "gush" of bloody

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discharge 2-3 weeks after surgery. If persistent or if you have questions please call the office.

Questions

Please call the advice nurse at 910-295-0213 for any questions or concerns. Call the FirstHealth operator at 910-715-1000 to call to reach the doctor on-call for **after hours emergencies**.

Post-op appointment

You will always be seen in 1 week and 4 weeks after surgery. You will often be made aware of this appointment date and time prior to your surgery, but we will also mail it to you. If for some reason you have not received this by one week following surgery, call the office 910-295-6831 to clarify. We may also ask to see you sooner than that and you will be told if we feel that is necessary.
