



SOUTHEASTERN SURGICAL ASSOCIATES

DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

LAPAROSCOPIC AND MINIMALLY INVASIVE SURGERY

Recovering from Gallbladder Surgery and/or Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy

DIET: You may resume a solid diet as soon as you are hungry. It is best to stay on a low fat bland diet and to eat plenty of fiber. Avoid fried, greasy, spicy or fatty foods or cream sauce. In 2 weeks you can slowly resume your normal diet. Drink plenty of water, juice or Gatorade the first few days. It is important to stay hydrated.

WOUND CARE: You may change the dressing at any time after surgery. You may shower 24 hours after surgery. Remove the band-aids before showering and leave them off if there is no drainage. A small amount of drainage and or bleeding is normal. Bruising around the wounds is common and will resolve with time. Pat your wounds dry after showering. Do not submerge your wounds in water for an extended period of time. Swimming is prohibited for the first week after surgery. Call the office if there are any signs of infection such as pain, redness, or persistent drainage

ACTIVITY: You will probably go slow for the first day after surgery, but try to walk at least three times a day. Stairs are not harmful. Avoid lifting anything heavier than 20 pounds for the first week. Refrain from strenuous activity, exercise, or sexual intercourse until after your follow-up visit. Do not drive or operate heavy equipment for 3-5 days after surgery or until you are completely off the narcotic pain medicine and are not hindered in any way.

MEDICATION: You will get a prescription for a narcotic painkiller before you leave the hospital. Start with one every four hours and increase to two if that doesn't help. Take the pills with food. While taking narcotics you should take a stool softener to avoid constipation. If pain meds make you nauseated, try extra strength Tylenol or Advil. If the nausea persists, call the office for a new prescription. Medications will not be refilled after hours.

FOLLOW-UP: Call the office at 508-775-1984 to make a follow up appointment for 1- 2 weeks after surgery. Do this as soon as you get home from the hospital or on the next business day if you are released after hours or on the weekend.

EMERGENCY: If you have any problems or questions, do not hesitate to call the office number. After hours, you will reach the answering service. Tell them your name, when you had surgery, what kind of surgery you had and what kind of problems you are having. They will contact the doctor. Call if you have severe pain, persistent vomiting or fever over 101.5 degrees. If it is an extreme emergency, please go to the closest emergency room.

Recovering from Laparoscopic Appendectomy

DIET: You may return to normal food after you go home from your surgery. You may wish to avoid heavy foods the day you go home; perhaps just take liquids that day. By the next day, you may eat whatever you wish.

INCISIONS: Remove the band-aids or gauze the day after you get home. There may be small tape strips across the incisions; peel these off if they haven't fallen off by themselves in 4 days. You may shower on the third day after your surgery; keep the incisions dry until then.

ACTIVITY: You will feel fatigued for at least one-two weeks after discharge; this is normal. Rest as much as you need. Count on being out of work for approximately two weeks. Take short walks 2 or 3 times daily. You may ride in a car as desired. You should not drive until you have been home at least 4 days, and you must be off your pain medications before starting to drive. Do not lift anything over 20 pounds, and refrain from sports and exercise during your first week home. You may go up and down stairs as desired. After one week, you may return to all normal activities, as you desire.

MEDICATIONS: Use your pain pills as prescribed (no more often than every 4 hours). You should switch to plain Tylenol (acetaminophen) or Advil (ibuprofen) by the 5th day after surgery. If you have a small skin-colored patch behind your ear (scopolamine patch), remove it the day after your surgery, and wash your hands after removing the patch. The pain pills (especially Tylox, Percocet, or Tylenol #3 with codeine) are prone to cause constipation. If you have not had a bowel movement by the 4th day after surgery, you should take a gentle laxative such as Milk of Magnesia.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS: You will find yourself feeling weak and tired for 1-2 weeks after going home; this will pass. Listen to your body and rest when you feel you need to. You might experience soreness in the right shoulder, like a sprain. This is due to the gas that is put into your abdomen during the surgery—it will go away in about 4 or 5 days. Your belly will feel bloated for about one week; you may not be able to close your slacks. This will also pass as the gas in your abdomen is absorbed. In the meantime, you might be more comfortable in loose fitting clothing. The belly button and left side incisions will be the most sore. You will probably develop mild bruising around one or more of your incisions.

CALL US IF: You develop fevers over 100.5 F. You develop enough drainage from the incisions to saturate a piece of gauze. Generally, you will feel stronger and less sore with every day that passes. If you begin to feel worse, rather than better, you should call us. Call the office when you get home to schedule a follow-up visit 10-14 days after your surgery.

Finally, if you have any questions or concerns regarding our surgery or recuperation, do not hesitate to call our office. We are here to help in any way we can.