

Hysterectomy, Abdominal & Vaginal Home Care Instructions

Please read the instructions outlined below. Refer to these instructions for the next few weeks. These discharge instructions provide you with general information on caring for yourself after surgery. Your caregiver may also give you specific instructions. While your treatment has been planned according to the most current medical practices available, unavoidable complications occasionally occur. If you have any problems or questions after discharge, please call your caregiver.

Home Care Instructions Following Your Hysterectomy

Healing will take time. You will have tenderness at the operative site and there may be some swelling and bruising at the wound site or sites. You may have some nausea. It would be good to have a responsible adult stay with you the first 24 hours after surgery.

- You may use acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Advil® or Motrin®) as needed for pain and inflammation if your surgeon has not given medication which would interfere with this. If unsure, ask your surgeon.
- An ice pack applied to your operative site for fifteen to twenty minutes, four times per day, for the first one to two days may help with discomfort and keep swelling down.
- After one to two days of ice packs, you may use a heating pad for twenty minutes, three to four times per day, or as directed by your surgeon to speed the healing process and as needed for comfort. Do not sleep with a heating pad! If you have diabetes, do not use a heating pad unless instructed to do so.
- You may resume normal diet and activities as directed. Do not douche or engage in sexual intercourse for six weeks after surgery.
- Do not lift more than five to ten pounds until your surgeon gives you the OK.
- Do not drive for at least one week after surgery or until feeling normal again or when instructed by your surgeon.
- Do not drive while taking prescription pain medications.
- Do not drink alcoholic beverages.



- Do not make important decision or sign legal documents for 24 hours after your surgery, or until you are feeling normal again.
- Change dressings as directed.
- Keep all appointments as scheduled and follow all instructions. Your first appointment is usually two weeks after surgery.
- Make sure that you and your family fully understand everything about your operation.

Seek Medical Attention If:

- There is increased bleeding from your surgical incision or from the vagina (birth canal).
- There is redness, swelling, or increasing pain in the wound area.
- Pus or drainage is coming from the wound.
- You notice a foul smell coming from the wound, dressing or vaginal area.
- You develop increasing abdominal pain.

Seek Immediate Medical Attention If:

- You develop lightheadedness or are feeling faint.
- You develop a rash.
- There is a breaking open of a suture (stitch) line or the wound edges come apart after sutures have been removed.
- You have difficulty breathing or develop allergies.
- You feel you are having any type of abnormal reaction to your medications.
- An unexplained oral temperature above 101°F (38.3°C) (orally) develops.