

Laparoscopic Appendix Removal (Appendectomy)

You will need someone to drive you home. If you had general anesthesia, you may feel drowsy or nauseated for a temporary period of time that may last 12 to 24 hours.

Following laparoscopic surgery, you may experience generalized abdominal pain that may extend to the shoulder blades and the back. This should improve over time (1-2 weeks).

Incision Care:

Leave your dressing on for the first 48 hours. You may take a sponge bath but avoid a shower or getting your wound wet for the first 2 days after surgery. After 48 hours when you remove the dressing, you may shower. (Avoid baths or hot tubs for the first few days.) You will likely have small pieces of tape (steri-strips) over your incision. These will naturally fall off over time, do not manually remove them. If you notice any thick yellow discharge, major swelling or severe discomfort, in the first few hours at home, you need to call the office.

Some pain, a small amount of blood, as well as bruising is expected and anticipated. This should resolve in a few days.

Diet:

You may resume a regular diet when you return home, however it is recommended that you eat light, easily digestible food for the first day or so after surgery and it is highly recommended that you avoid foods that give you excessive gas. Avoid hot, spicy foods in the initial few days to allow your gastrointestinal tract to return to normal. To avoid constipation, particularly if you are taking narcotics for post-operative pain control, you may have a gentle laxative such as Milk of Magnesia.

Medication:

Please be sure to take all medications that you take on a regular basis. However, it would be a good idea to avoid Aspirin, Motrin or Advil for five days after your operation, unless prescribed or recommended by your surgeon.

Pain medication will be prescribed for you; you may take it as needed. You should avoid driving, operating heavy equipment. Side effects of narcotics may include nausea, vomiting, lightheadedness, rash, irritability, or fatigue. Once pain begins to subside, you may try switching to some plain Tylenol after the first day or two since you may no longer need the narcotic. This will help to avoid constipation as well.

Activity:

You are to avoid heavy lifting (nothing greater than 10 pounds) for the first week after an operation. Even though you have a laparoscopic procedure, you still have incisions that are prone to hernia formation. You

should slowly start to feel normal during the first week so perform physical activities in moderation. If you return to heavy lifting or smoking, which can cause coughing, you will increase your chances for hernia formation.

Activities such as deep breathing, walking and going up stairs will encourage the resolution of some of the stiffness and discomfort and is highly recommended.

Resumption of driving is dependent on the type of procedure you have had and your level of pain and mobility, generally a few days to up to two weeks after surgery. After major abdominal surgery, it is recommended you wait until your first post-operative visit to the surgeon before initiating any driving.

Call the Office at (815) 744-0330:

- When you return home from surgery to schedule a follow-up appointment to take place 7-10 days after surgery date.
- If you have bleeding from the surgical site that requires more than two maxi-pad dressing changes.
- You are still unable to have a bowel movement after trying Milk of Magnesia on the fourth day following surgery.
- You develop a fever of 101 degrees or higher following the day of surgery. However, low-grade fevers are not unusual after abdominal surgery and should be managed with coughing, deep breathing, and walking. You may take over the counter Tylenol every 6 hours as needed.
- If you have any other problems or concerns.

Go to the Emergency Room:

- If you have been unable to urinate six to eight hours after being discharged from your surgery and have a feeling of fullness.
- If you notice any unusual intra-abdominal organs protruding through your incision.
- If you have serious problems and are unable to reach your surgeon or office staff.