

## Common Questions

### Q: When will I return to normal activity?

**A:** Do not lift heavy objects for the first six weeks after your operation. 'Heavy' refers to anything over 10 lbs eg. a full laundry basket, bags of heavy groceries etc. Also, do not vacuum or do any exercises that may strain your abdominal muscles. For the next three months, do not lift anything heavier than 20 lbs.

**There are no lifting restrictions for laparoscopy patients who have not had a hysterectomy.**

- Slowly increase your activity to your usual level, you are encouraged to walk but be careful not to 'overdo' it. If you are tired or having pain, stop what you are doing and rest. You may use stairs but do not place yourself in a situation where a fall could occur.
- Do NOT have sexual intercourse for 6 weeks. You will have a follow up appointment with your gynaecologist and you can discuss whether or not you are ready to resume sexual relations at that time as well as other forms of physical activity.

### Q: What should I eat after my surgery?

**A:** You do not have to be on a special diet after your surgery unless otherwise stated by your physician. Because you are less active after your surgery, you may become constipated.

- To reduce the risk of constipation, drink lots of fluids and choose foods that are high in fibre. Types of foods high in fibre include: natural bran, fruits, vegetables, lentils and whole grain products. You can take a stool softener such as Colace or a gentle laxative such as Milk of Magnesia or Restoralax (unless otherwise directed by your physician).

### Other important points to remember:

- You may have some bleeding or spotting from your vagina for up to 6 weeks after your operation. It may be red or brown in colour and you may use sanitary pads. Do not douche as this could cause a serious infection.
- If you have an incision, you may feel numbness around the abdominal incision. This numbness will improve over time.
- Do not use tampons for 6 weeks
- If you have had a hysterectomy you will not have menstrual periods
- If you had a short hospital stay you must not drive, operate machinery, take sedative drugs or drink alcohol for 24 hours following surgery because you have received an anesthetic.

**Remember:** : If you are uncertain or worried about anything, please do not hesitate to call.

# Gynaecological Discharge Instructions for Major Surgical Procedures

## Thoughts for Home . . . .

**Please bring these instructions with you to the hospital on the day of your surgery.**



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Sciences Centre**

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Telephone: 519-685-8500

[www.lhsc.on.ca/gynecology](http://www.lhsc.on.ca/gynecology)

## Thoughts for Home ...

The surgery that I had is called:

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It was performed on:

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Like any surgery, the possibility of complications can arise. Before my surgery, I was informed by my surgeon of some of the potential complications that could occur during or even after my surgery. It is important for me to understand and remember all of the signs and symptoms to look for.

Read on for reasons to **REACT**.

### **SURGEON INFORMATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (DAYTIME): \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone After Hours:

(519)685-8500 Press 'O' for operator.  
Ask for the gynaecology doctor who is on-call.

## Laparoscopy

If you had a laparoscopy:

- You may have shoulder and/or abdominal discomfort for a few days.
- A small dressing may cover your incision - remove this the day following surgery
- Sutures, if used, will dissolve on their own
- You may shower or take a bath the day after your procedure

### Reasons to **REACT**:

The following are signs and symptoms that if you experience, you need to **REACT** by contacting your surgeon or heading to your nearest hospital's EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT.

### Pain

- It is normal to experience some pain after surgery however, if you notice that the pain has increased and is not relieved by pain medication = **REACT**
- If you experience pain or burning upon urination = **REACT**
- If you experience pain or swelling in your legs = **REACT**

## Infection

- If you develop a fever ( temperature over 38°C/100.4°F) or experience chills = **REACT**
- If you experience foul smelling discharge from your vagina that is greenish in colour = **REACT**
- If you notice an increase in redness or pain in your incision or if the incision is hot to touch and/or the incision begins to leak yellowish coloured drainage = **REACT**

### Bleeding

- If you experience any sudden increases in vaginal bleeding including passing any large size clots from your vagina = **REACT**
- If your incision separates or begins to bleed a large amount of bright red blood = **REACT**
- If you notice blood in your urine = **REACT**

### Bladder/Bowel

- If you experience difficulty emptying your bladder or if you find that you are having to pass small amounts of urine often = **REACT**
- If you are not passing gas or have not had a bowel movement for an extended period of time = **REACT**