

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is common to feel tired for the first few weeks following any operation. • Try to get up and walk around as much as possible, but not to the point that you hurt. • Do not do any vigorous physical activity for 4 weeks, or until you feel well. • Do not lift anything over 15 pounds for 4-6 weeks • Do not drive a car until you are off of pain medicine for 24 hours. • Resuming sexual activity is usually fine per your comfort level.
Diet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please follow any post-operative diet instructions you were given. • Otherwise, start your diet slowly and advance as tolerated. • Patients that have had gallbladder surgery should stay on a low fat diet for at least 2 months. Eat small, frequent meals initially to help your body adjust. • Drink lots of fluids and remain well hydrated.
Bathing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may shower 24 hours after your surgery. • Do not bathe in a tub or submerge your wounds under water until 4 weeks postop.
Pain Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoulder pain is a frequent complaint after laparoscopic and robotic surgery. It usually improves after 3-4 days. Walking is encouraged to improve this symptom. • If you were given a prescription for narcotic pain medication prior to discharge: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Only take the medication when you are having pain and always try to take the smallest dose possible to control your pain. ○ As your pain subsides, you will find that non-prescription medications (such as Tylenol/Acetaminophen) may control the pain well.
Incision Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your wound was closed with surgical glue, <u>do not remove or pick at the glue</u>. It will fall off in 10-20 days. • Remove all dressings (bandages) after 48 hours, <u>or sooner</u> if dressing is saturated. • Keep all your incisions clean and dry by changing dressings at least every 12 hours.
Bowel Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pain medicines often cause constipation. • Most patients do not have their first bowel movement until at least 3 days after surgery. • If you feel you are constipated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use a 100mg tablet of Colace (docusate sodium) twice/day. Increase your dose up to 3 tablets twice/day if you still find it difficult to have a bowel movement. If your stools become too loose, reduce the dose. ○ To help achieve regularity, try fiber supplements (such as Metamucil or Fibercon) or breakfast cereals high in dietary fiber.
Return to Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You may usually return to work 1-2 weeks postop depending on your surgery, occupation, and how you feel. • Ask for light duty work if possible. The office will complete any necessary work forms.
Common Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A <u>sore throat</u> is common from the breathing tube that was placed during your surgery. This usually resolves in 1-2 days, but throat lozenges and cough drops may help. • If you had an inguinal (groin) hernia repair, you may have scrotal swelling, bruising, and/or pain. We recommend using scrotal support (jock strap/hernia truss), compression shorts, and ice. • You may notice some pain/blood with urination for 2 days if you had a catheter placed during surgery.
When to Call	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your temperature is greater than 101.5°F (or 38.3°C). • You have continued and worsening pain, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. • If you are unable to tolerate any diet. • You have new redness or swelling, increasing pain, a lot of bleeding, pus, or a foul odor from the wound. • If any of your symptoms are worsening.
Follow Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you do not have a follow-up appointment, call the office at (941) 254-4957 to schedule one for 1-2 weeks after you are discharged from the hospital. *Unless your physician specifies another date. • Call the office during regular business hours for any questions that you may have. • In case of emergencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Call the office at (941) 254-4957. An answering service is available 24 hours a day and can direct your call to covering providers. ○ If required, call 911 or proceed to the emergency room.