

# HENDERSON & WALTON

## WOMEN'S CENTER, P.C.

### DIAGNOSTIC/OPERATIVE LAPAROSCOPY

### DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

#### **GENERAL:**

Most patients are discharged home on the same day of surgery, but some patients may require overnight hospitalization. Recovery time may vary depending on the extent of surgery that is performed and may be longer for operative laparoscopy than a diagnostic laparoscopy. Following the procedure, you may experience a sore throat, pain in your shoulders or chest, nausea, or swelling of the abdomen and extremities. These symptoms should improve by the second post-operative day.

#### **PAIN MANAGEMENT:**

To control your pain, please take Tylenol every 4 hours or Motrin 800mg every eight hours following your procedure. Your physician may prescribe something stronger if needed. It is advised that patients take prescription medications only as directed by their physician. Non-prescription anesthetic lozenges or gargles (i.e. chloraseptic) are recommended for any patients that have a sore throat. Your abdominal pain should improve each day following your surgery. **You should call the office immediately if there is an increase in abdominal pain that is not controlled by medication recommended by your physician.**

#### **DIET:**

You may resume a normal diet as soon as it can be tolerated. In the days following your surgery you should try to increase your intake of fluids, especially water and avoid the use of alcohol with prescribed pain medications.

#### **CONSTIPATION:**

There should not be a problem with constipation due to surgery or pain medication if you eat a well balanced diet. Here are some things that you can do to help prevent this uncomfortable problem.

1. Include roughage in your diet: fruits and vegetables-especially prunes, lettuce, and celery. Increasing your dietary fiber such as bran cereals can also help.
2. Drink water daily.
3. You may use over-the-counter laxatives, milk of magnesia, mineral oil, or stool softeners if needed.

#### **ACTIVITY:**

Following your procedure, you should restrict your activity for the first 24 hours after surgery. We recommend that you not operate any kind of equipment/automobile during the first 24 hours after surgery or while you are taking prescribed pain medications. After 24 hours, you may gradually resume activities as you can tolerate it. You should be able to climb stairs and have no weight restrictions for lifting. Low impact exercise is recommended after surgery as it promotes healing, but should avoid vigorous exercises until after your post-operative visit with your physician. Most individuals are able to resume at least 80% of their normal activities within two weeks of surgery. The average time to return to work is one week, but may be shorter or longer depending on the amount of surgery that was performed.

**WOUNDS:**

Generally, the operative wounds are closed with sutures beneath the skin, or a solution that seals the skin edges and promotes healing. Some stitches may be visible above the incision and will be removed at your post-operative visit. There may be steri-strips or band-aids placed over the incisions. Band-aids may be removed on post-operative day one, and steri-strips should remain over the incision for one week. Do not be alarmed if there is bruising near the incisions or along the lower abdomen, as this is common. It is also common to have a small amount of bleeding or oozing from the incisions. If this occurs, please place a gauze pad over the incision. Call the office if you are soaking through gauze pads within 2 hours. **In addition, you will need to report any signs of infection immediately, such as fever greater than 100.4, redness and swelling at the incision, foul odor, or pus-like drainage coming from the incision.**

**BATHING:**

You may take a shower the day of your surgery. Soaking in tubs or swimming pools should be avoided until the wounds have healed. It takes approximately 1 week after surgery for these incisions to heal.

**MENSTRUATION:**

Laparoscopic surgery will rarely affect your menstrual pattern. It is not uncommon for patients to begin their cycle after surgery or to experience a delay with their menstruation. Call the office if your bleeding is more excessive than the heaviest day of your normal period.

**URINATION:**

Normally, a catheter is placed at the time of surgery to empty your bladder. In some instances, this can cause a bladder infection. You should notify our office if you experience frequent or painful urination. General anesthesia may cause urinary retention. **Please notify the office if you have the urge to go to the restroom but are unable to do so.**

**SEXUAL INTERCOURSE:**

Avoid intercourse until your physician sees you at your post-operative appointment.

**RETURN APPOINTMENT:**

Schedule an appointment to see your doctor two weeks after your surgery. If you have any problems or questions prior to this appointment, please do not hesitate to call our office at 930-1800.