

Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy Instructions Following Surgery

***If you have increasing redness around the incision sites, thick drainage, or fever above 101°F call the office as soon as possible (314-434-1211) to speak with our clinical staff.**

WHAT TO EXPECT

- You will feel tired and sore after surgery. You should be about 85% improved by post-op day #7. However, you might not feel 100% improved for 6 weeks after surgery.
- You may experience shoulder pain or gas bubbles a few days after surgery. This is from the gas used during the operation and is common with any laparoscopic procedure.
- You may or may not turn black and blue around your incision sites and surrounding tissue.
- You may or may not experience loose stools a few days after the surgery. If you do, this should improve and should not continue for more than 1-2 weeks. Call our office if it persists.

INSTRUCTIONS

- You may shower **2 full days after** your surgery. Remove the dressings, but leave steri-strips on, if present.
- If you have tape directly on your skin (*steri-strips*) under your gauze dressing, leave those on and do not remove them. They will fall off on their own after post-op day #7-10.
- The sutures used in your surgery are self-dissolving and should not need to be removed.
- If you have a J-P drain in, (Jackson Pratt) you will not be able to shower until the drain is removed. This is removed in the office. The doctor will tell you when this should be removed. You will call the office to make that appointment with the nurse or doctor. ***To be removed you must be draining less than 30 ml of fluid in a 24 hour period.***
 - Please empty the drain at least twice a day and record your output. You do not need to save the fluid for your surgeon.

MEDICATIONS

- You will be sent home on pain medicine. While on pain medicine, it is a good idea to take a stool softener to counteract constipation. You can also take Milk of Magnesia (a laxative). All are over the counter. You **should not** drive while on pain medicine.
 - **Call the office** if you experience more than 5-6 watery bowel movements in a 24 hour period OR if you have not had a bowel movement in 3 days with taking over the counter medications.

- If you feel that the pain medication is too strong, you may take Ibuprofen (*Advil*) or other over the counter pain medication that has been approved by your Primary Care Provider. Do **NOT** take in conjunction with your prescription pain medication.
 - A heating pad may also bring some comfort when used starting 2 days after your surgery in 15-20 minute increments. Do not use high heat.

RESTRICTIONS

- You should not do any strenuous exercise for 6-8 weeks unless directed otherwise. No lifting over 10-15 lbs. (Ex: a gallon of milk weighs 8 lbs). This is to avoid a possible hernia at the incision site.
- You may walk as much as you want (*including stairs*). You may also do cardio, but avoid exercises that use your abdominal muscles.

FOLLOW UP

- Call St. Louis Surgical Consultants for a “**post-op**” visit with your surgeon 1-2 weeks after your surgery (314-434-1211).
- **The office is open for phone calls from 8-5 pm Monday-Thursday, Friday 8-4 pm. For after hours, call the Medical Exchange @ 314-364-5262 to speak to the surgeon on call.**