

Discharge Instructions for Laparoscopic Gallbladder Removal Surgery (Cholecystectomy)



You had surgery to remove your gallbladder. This is called a cholecystectomy. You had the surgery done with laparoscopy. This means it was done with several small incisions. People who have the surgery done this way often recover more quickly. They may have less pain than with open gallbladder surgery.

You can live a full and healthy life without your gallbladder. This includes eating the foods and doing the things you enjoyed before. Below are guidelines for home care after surgery.

Home care

To care for yourself at home:

- Get plenty of rest. Don't worry if you feel tired for the first couple of weeks after your surgery. Fatigue is common. Nap when you feel tired.
- Wash the skin around your cut (incision) daily with mild soap and water. It's OK to shower the day after your surgery unless your healthcare provider says not to.
- Eat your normal diet. But don't eat rich, greasy, or spicy food for a few days. Many surgeons advise a low-fat diet for the first month after surgery. Don't eat fried food during this time.
- You can walk around the house, do office work, climb stairs, or ride in a car if you feel able to do so.
- Ask someone to drive you to your appointments for the next 3 days. Don't drive until you have stopped taking pain medicine. Make sure you can step on the brake pedal with no delay.
- Eat more fiber and use a stool softener if you are constipated. Pain medicine can cause constipation. Talk with your provider if you need more help.
- Don't sit in a bathtub, swimming pool, or hot tub until your healthcare provider says it's safe. Wait until the incision is closed. Wait until any surgical tubes (drains) are removed.

Follow-up care

Make a follow-up appointment with your surgeon as advised. Call your healthcare provider if these symptoms don't go away within 1 week after your surgery:

- Extreme tiredness (fatigue)
- Pain around the incision
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Loss of appetite

When to call your healthcare provider

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of these:

- Yellowing of your eyes or skin (jaundice)
- Chills
- Fever of 100.4°F (38.0°C) or higher, or as directed by your provider

- Redness or swelling of the incision
- Fluid leaking or a bad smell from the incision
- Incision pain that gets worse
- Dark or rust-colored urine
- Stool that is light in color instead of brown
- Increasing belly pain
- Rectal bleeding
- Trouble breathing or shortness of breath
- Leg swelling

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