

## After Laparoscopic Appendectomy (Appendix Removal)



You have had a surgery to remove your appendix. The appendix is a narrow pouch attached to the lower right part of your large intestine. During your surgery, the doctor made 2 to 4 small cuts (incisions). One was near your belly button. The others were on other parts of your belly. Through one incision, the doctor inserted a thin tube with a camera attached (laparoscope). Other surgery tools were used in the other incisions.

While you recover you may have pain in your shoulder and chest for up to 48 hours after surgery. This is common. It is caused by carbon dioxide gas used during the surgery. It will go away.

### Home care

- Keep your incisions clean and dry.
- Don't pull off the thin strips of tape covering your incision. They should fall off on their own in a week or so.
- Wear loose-fitting clothes. This will help cause less irritation around your incisions.
- You can shower as normal. Gently wash around your incisions with soap and water. Don't take a bath until your incisions are fully healed and your healthcare provider says it's OK.
- Don't drive until you have stopped taking prescription pain medicine.
- Don't lift anything heavier than 10 pounds until your healthcare provider says it's OK.
- Limit sports and strenuous activities for 1 or 2 weeks.
- Resume light activities around your home as soon as you feel comfortable.

### What to eat

Eat a bland, low-fat diet (listed below) at first. If that goes down well, you can gradually begin a regular diet.

- Well-cooked soft cereals
- Mashed potatoes
- Plain toast or bread
- Plain crackers
- Plain pasta
- Rice
- Cottage cheese
- Pudding
- Low-fat yogurt
- Low-fat milk
- Ripe bananas

Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water a day, unless directed otherwise. If you are constipated, take a fiber laxative or a stool softener. Pain medicines can cause constipation. Try not to strain to move your bowels.

## **When to call your healthcare provider**

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

- Swelling, pain, fluid, or redness in the incision that gets worse
- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, or as directed by your healthcare provider
- Belly (abdominal) pain that gets worse
- Severe diarrhea, bloating, or constipation
- Nausea or vomiting
- Trouble breathing or shortness of breath
- Leg swelling

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