

## INPATIENT SURGICAL CONSULTANTS

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### INSTRUCTIONS AFTER LAPAROSCOPIC APPENDECTOMY

1. Keep the incisions dry for 24 hours. Remove the dressings 24 hours after surgery. Unless specifically instructed, do not leave the dressing on for more than 48 hours. There may be steri-strips (small pieces of tape) over the incisions. Keep them in place until they loosen and the edges begin to curl. This usually happens one to two weeks after surgery.
2. Once the bandages are removed, you may take a shower. You may wash the incision gently and pat it dry. No further bandage is necessary. Do not take a bath or swim until you have been seen at your first postoperative visit in our office.
3. Black and blue bruising and mild swelling around the incision is common and harmless. If severe swelling, bleeding or increasing redness or tenderness occurs, call our office. An ice bag placed over the surgical area on and off for the first 24 hours may help with swelling and soreness.
4. There are no restrictions as to what you may eat. Avoid overeating. Most patients do better with frequent small meals for the first week or two after surgery. Avoid alcohol if you are taking narcotic pain medicine (i.e. Percocet, Darvocet, Tylenol #3, etc).
5. Avoid constipation. It may be helpful to take a stool softener for the first week or until you are no longer taking narcotic pain medication. An example of this is Colace, which is available over the counter. Take one tablet (100 mg) twice daily. You may also use a fiber supplement such as Metamucil or Fibercon. If 2 days pass without a bowel movement, take a gentle laxative such as Milk of Magnesia (two tablespoons by mouth). If this is not effective within 24 hours, take a stronger laxative such as magnesium citrate- or take a Fleet's enema.
6. Do not lift anything greater than 15 pounds or perform focused abdominal exercises (sit-ups, crunches, etc) for one month after surgery. Otherwise, activity should be undertaken as tolerated. You are encouraged to walk and should try to do so several times each day. You may drive once you are confident you can safely control a car. You may not drive within 24 hours of taking any narcotic pain medication. Most people are ready to drive 4 or 5 days after surgery.
7. Most people experience mild to moderate discomfort and pain after surgery. Usually, over the counter pain medication provides adequate relief of post operative pain. Only take narcotic pain medication for pain not relieved by over the counter medications. Try not to take more than necessary, as these prescription medications may cause dizziness, constipation or nausea.
  - \_\_\_ Ibuprofen (motrin, advil, etc) 400 mg three times daily with meals
  - \_\_\_ Tylenol 650 mg (two regular strength tablets) every 4 hours as needed for pain
  - \_\_\_ Percocet 5/325 one tablet every 4 hours as needed for pain
  - \_\_\_ Darvocet N-100 one tablet every 6 hours as needed for pain (do not take with Tylenol)
  - \_\_\_ Tylenol #3 one to two tablets every 4 hours as needed for pain (do not take with regular Tylenol)
8. Call the office (240-403-0621) for worsening abdominal pain, vomiting, fevers over 101 degrees, wound drainage, or any other concerns.
9. **Call 240-403-0621 to make a post-op follow up appointment. You should be seen in 1 to 2 weeks. Outpatients are seen at our offices at 9715 Medical Center Dr, Suite 233.**