

Going Home after a Hysterectomy



UHN

Discharge Instructions for Patients

What kind of activity can I do after my surgery?

Do not do any strenuous or difficult activity (such as heavy lifting, or carrying groceries) for 6 weeks after surgery. Avoid lifting anything heavier than a phone book.

Walking is good for you, so walk as often as you can. Remember that you should not sit for long periods of time at home or when you are traveling. Get up from time to time and move around. At your check up after your surgery (about 3-4 weeks later), your doctor will tell you if you can start exercising regularly again.

Will my surgery affect my ability to be sexually active and when can I have sex?

Avoid having sex for 4 to 6 weeks after your surgery, unless your doctor advises you differently.

A hysterectomy usually has no physical effect on your ability to experience sexual pleasure or orgasm. If you have concerns about your sexuality and having sex again, speak to your doctor or nurse.

What should I keep in mind when I am cleaning myself?

- Keep your incision (cut) clean and dry.
- Shower instead of bathing. To prevent infection, carefully wash your genital area with a mild, non-perfumed soap and rinse well with water.
- After having a bowel movement or urinating, wipe yourself from front to back.

What kind of feminine products should I avoid after my surgery?

Do not put anything in the vagina for 4 to 6 weeks unless your doctor advises you differently.

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Also:

- Do not use tampons
- Do not douche
- Do not use feminine deodorants or sprays
- Do not use scented sanitary pads

What is surgical menopause?

If you had your ovaries removed during your surgery and you have not yet reached menopause, you may experience surgical menopause. Surgical menopause happens because your body does not make the hormones (estrogen /progesterone) that your ovaries produced. Symptoms of surgical menopause include hot flashes and night sweats. Ask your doctor if you need medication to replace the lost hormones.

If you have already reached menopause, you should not notice a difference in your menopause symptoms after surgery.

Will I have vaginal bleeding?

It is normal to have slight vaginal spotting or bleeding after surgery. If you notice the amount of blood is more than a light period, or is bright red, call your doctor.

What should I eat and drink?

- The foods you eat can help you with your recovery and prevent constipation.
- To help your incisions (cuts) heal: eat foods that are high in protein like meats, fish, cheese and other dairy products
- To help prevent constipation: eat high fiber foods such as fresh fruit and leafy vegetables and bran, and drink lots of fluids (water, tea, juice,)

Will I be able to drive?

You may not be able to drive after your surgery because of pain you may feel or pain medications that make you drowsy. Do not drive if:

- you are hesitating to break or check over your shoulder because of pain
- If you are taking narcotic pain medication (like, Tylenol 3 or Percocet)

Check with your insurance company if your plan limits driving after surgery

Important Points to Remember:

- Prevent constipation by drinking plenty of fluids and eating foods that are high in fibre, fresh fruits, and leafy vegetables and bran. If you are constipated you may take a mild laxative such as Milk of Magnesia, Colace[®] or Senokot[®].
- Eat high protein foods to help you heal from your surgery.
- Prevent urinary tract infection by drinking plenty of fluids and urinating as soon as you feel the need to. Do not hold your urine.
- Do not put anything in your vagina for 4 to 6 weeks after your surgery, unless your doctor advises you differently.
- Keep your follow-up appointment with your doctor.
- Visit your family doctor for regular check ups.

What should I watch out for?

Call your surgeon at 416-946-2254 if:

- Your temperature is higher than 38 degrees Celsius.
- You have bright red vaginal bleeding.
- Your pain medication does not make your pain better.
- Your constipation is not relieved by Milk of Magnesia or any other mild laxative.
- You feel a burning sensation when you urinate or it is hard to urinate
- Your surgery incision (cut) becomes painful, red, swells up, foul (bad) smelling or there is pus draining from it.

Go to your local hospital Emergency Department if:

- You have chest pain, cough blood, or have trouble breathing.
- Your calves become red and/or painful.
- If you are having heavy vaginal bleeding (if you need to change your pad every 2 hours, or you are passing large blood clots).