LAPAROSCOPIC APPENDECTOMY POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

CARE OF THE INCISION
* After surgery, you will usually have 3 small abdominal incisions, each covered with a dressing or bandaid. The dressing can be removed after 48 hours. Under the dressing you will find several thin paper tapes (steri-strips) covering the incision. The steri-strips should be left in place. The stitches are beneath the skin and will dissolve. You may shower after the dressing is removed.

or

*Topical Skin Adhesive may be used over your incision instead of the paper steri-strips. It is a sterile liquid skin adhesive that holds the wound edges together. The film will usually remain in place for 5 – 10 days then naturally fall off your skin. Do not scratch, rub, or pick at the adhesive skin film. This may loosen the film before your wound is healed. If you are required to place a dressing over the incision, do not place tape over the skin adhesive since this may remove the skin adhesive.

Do not scrub the incisions. Just let the water run over them and then gently pat the areas dry. Do not submerge the incisions for 1 week (no baths, hot tubs, or swimming pools.)

COMFORT MEASURES – You may feel tired and have some abdominal discomfort and bloating for a few days to a few weeks. Moving and/or walking will help relieve this. You may have bruising, swelling and soreness. Use an ice pack or bag of frozen peas on the incision 20 minutes every hour for the first 3 days. Take ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) 2 tablets 3 times a day to relieve any pain that you have. A narcotic pain medication prescribed by your doctor may be used in addition to ibuprofen as needed.

FOLLOW-UP OFFICE VISIT – You need to be seen in the office approximately two to three weeks after your surgery. You will be given this appointment when the date of your surgery has been set and it will be documented in the surgical paperwork mailed to you.

ACTIVITY/RETURN TO WORK - Limit your activities after surgery to what is comfortable for you. Don’t do any heavy lifting or weight bearing exercise for 6 weeks. Refrain from any activity that causes pain. Wear loose, comfortable clothing. You may return to work when you feel ready (usually 1 -2 weeks) as long as your job does not involve heavy lifting or strenuous activity. You may return to work before being seen in the office postoperatively.

DRIVING – You may drive when you are not using any prescription pain medication and when you are able to react normally.

WHEN TO CALL THE OFFICE – Do not hesitate to call the office if you develop a fever (temperature greater that 101), shaking chills, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, dizziness, bleeding or drainage from your incision, redness around your incision, persistent or increased pain, or with any other problem that concerns you.

DIET – You may have gas pains and/or discomfort while your digestion returns to normal. Eat light meals until bowel habits return to your baseline function. Then return to eating normally.
**CONSTIPATION** – All pain medication has the potential to cause constipation. Increasing your fiber (fruits, vegetables, bran, etc) and fluid intake will help to avoid this problem. If more than 24 hours have passed without having a bowel movement, you may use Milk of Magnesia as directed. If problem persist, please contact the office.

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