At Home After Gynecological Surgery

This is a guide to help with your care at home.

Activity

• You may find that you get tired easily and need extra rest. This is normal.

• You may do some light household activities such as cooking, washing dishes, and light cleaning.

• Walking is the best thing for you after surgery. Start slowly and go further each day.

• Avoid activities like vacuuming, shovelling, mowing, or lifting anything over 10 pounds for 6 weeks.

• Do not drive a car for at least 2 weeks after your surgery. **Do not drive if you are taking pain pills.**

• It’s OK to bathe or shower. Pat your incision (cut) lightly to dry.
Meals and snacks

- It may take time for your appetite to get back to normal. Try eating smaller meals and snacks more often.

- Healthy meals will help your body heal. Eating healthy foods from all food groups is very important for wound healing. These groups are **fruits and vegetables, milk products, whole grains, and meats and meat alternatives**. After surgery, make sure that you eat enough protein (lean meats such as chicken, fish, eggs, legumes, tofu), **fatty acids, vitamin C, zinc, and iron** (whole grains, dark leafy greens, and beans).

- Drink 8-10 glasses of water a day.

- You may find that your bowel movements (stools, poop) are hard, or that it is hard to move your bowels (go to the bathroom). If so, drink more fluids (such as water and juices). Eat whole grain cereals such as bran flakes and shredded wheat, whole grain breads, brown rice, raw vegetables, whole fruits with their skins, stewed and dried fruits, figs, raisins, and nuts.
Vaginal discharge or bleeding

- You may have reddish-brown discharge for up to 6 weeks after surgery.
- Do not use tampons for 6 weeks.
- Do not douche or put anything into your vagina for 6 weeks.

Sexual activity

- Sexual intercourse (sex) should be avoided for 6 weeks after surgery to let the vagina heal.
- When you do start to have sex again, your abdomen (tummy area) may feel tender for several months. You may want to try positions such as side-lying and female-on-top which may be more comfortable for you while your abdomen is healing inside.

Menstrual cycle

- After a hysterectomy, you will no longer have menstrual periods.
- If both of your ovaries were removed, you will go through menopause.
Blood clots

• You have a higher risk of forming a blood clot after major abdominal surgery.
• Signs of a blood clot in your legs are redness, swelling, warmth, or pain anywhere in either leg.
• You may be given a medication called Fragmin® by injection to prevent blood clots.
• You may need to keep taking this medication after you go home.

Follow-up care

• An appointment will be booked with your surgeon 6-8 weeks after you go home.

What are your questions?
Please ask. We are here to help you.
Call your doctor or go to the closest Emergency Department if you have:

› Fever (temperature of 38.5°C (101.3°F) or higher)
› Heavy vaginal bleeding
› Severe pain or increasing pain
› Increased redness, swelling or warmth around your incision
› Drainage from your incision
› The edges of your incision separate (come apart)
› Any of the warning signs of a blood clot such as leg swelling and pain, chest pain, or trouble breathing
Looking for more health information?
Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here: http://library.nshealth.ca/PatientGuides
Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.
For more information go to http://library.novascotia.ca

Nova Scotia Health Authority promotes a smoke-free, vape-free, and scent-free environment.
Please do not use perfumed products. Thank you!

Nova Scotia Health Authority
www.nshealth.ca

Prepared by: Gynecology-Oncology, 5A, Victoria General site ©
Designed by: NSHA Library Services

The information in this brochure is for informational and educational purposes only.
The information is not intended to be and does not constitute healthcare or medical advice.
If you have any questions, please ask your healthcare provider.

WP85-0414 Updated February 2017
The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.