

# Laparoscopy

## General Information

A laparoscopy is the insertion of a laparoscope into the abdomen or pelvic area.

A laparoscope is a thin, lighted tube. It allows your health care provider to view the abdominal and pelvic organs on a TV screen.

A small amount of air is used to expand the abdomen for a better view.

The surgery usually has two or three lower abdominal incisions, one of them near the navel (belly button).

## After the Surgery

- When you get home, rest or do quiet activities for the rest of the day. The next day you may be as active as you feel you are able.
- There may be some blood on the bandage. This is common.
- You may feel a burning when you urinate the first time after the surgery. This should go away by the next day.
- You may shower the next day. Keep the surgery site covered with fresh bandages for the next 2 days.

If you have Steri-Strips<sup>®</sup>, leave the bandages on for 1 week. After that, just keep the area clean and dry.

### Your Health Care Provider

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

- You may feel chest, back, neck or shoulder discomfort because of the air used to expand the abdomen. This can last up to 48 hours. You may want to shift your body positions often. The knee-to-chest position may help to relieve discomfort.
- Avoid smoking.
- You may have some light vaginal bleeding. This should not last longer than 3 to 5 days.
- You should not put anything into your vagina (tampons or douches) nor should you have sexual intercourse for 7 days. Your health care provider may tell you to wait longer.

## Discomfort

Your health care provider may give you a pain medicine. Take this as prescribed. You may also take over-the-counter pain relief such as acetaminophen (Tylenol<sup>®</sup>), as directed by your health care provider.

**(over)**

Your prescription pain medicine may have acetaminophen (the active ingredient in Tylenol). If you are taking other products that contain this (such as cold, cough or allergy medicines) talk with your pharmacist to see how much you can safely take.

## Activity Level

- Slowly increase your activity each day. Rest when you feel tired.
- Return to your normal activities when your abdominal discomfort goes away.
- You may drive and climb stairs.
- You may bathe or shower.
- Avoid sexual intercourse, sports, heavy lifting and exercise for 7 days.

## Diet

- Eat well-balanced meals and drink at least eight to 10 glasses of water every day.
- Pain medicines can cause constipation. To avoid constipation:
  - drink plenty of water
  - eat more fiber (fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains)
  - get regular exercise; walking will help.

## Side Effects

The following side effects are normal and should not cause you worry:

- aches and pains around the incision site
- slight oozing of blood or watery material from the incision site
- aches in your shoulders and upper chest
- slight vaginal bleeding
- sore throat for 1 or 2 days
- bruising on your abdomen
- puffy feeling in your abdomen for several days.

## When To Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider if you have any of the following:

- poor pain relief
- a temperature of 101 F or higher
- bleeding that won't stop
- pus-like drainage, increasing redness, swelling, tenderness or warmth at the incision site
- nausea and vomiting that won't stop
- have pain or a burning feeling when you urinate.