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Laparoscopic Appendectomy Post-Operative Instructions

What to Expect: Most patients will be discharged home the day after surgery but this depends on your health and the severity of appendicitis. Shoulder pain is common and this is from the carbon dioxide used in the procedure; this is absorbed by the body over 48-72 hours. Your throat may be sore from the breathing tube. Cough drops and throat lozenges are soothing.

Diet: You may resume a solid diet as soon as you are hungry. Drink plenty of water and fluids like Gatorade the first few days. It is best to start with a low fat, bland diet and to eat plenty of fiber. There are no dietary restrictions.

Wound Care: You will have steri-strip tapes over the incisions. You may shower after 48 hours after surgery but avoid scrubbing the steri-strips and dry them afterwards. Avoid bathing or swimming for one week. The strips can come off at one week time. Call the office if there are any signs of infection such as pain, redness, or persistent drainage.

Pain Control: You should not have severe pain after surgery. The use of narcotics causes unnecessary problems with constipation and nausea and should be avoided when possible; if you are constipated, Colace is a stool softener that can help. The best pain medications are Acetaminophen (Tylenol) and Ibuprofen (Advil). Advil should be avoided in patients with kidney disease. You should take Tylenol and Advil regularly every 6 hours for 48 hours then as needed after this.

Exercise and Activity: You may or may not feel tired the night of surgery but by the next day you should be walking and resuming all non-strenuous activities. Avoid lifting anything heavier than 10 lbs in the first week (including babies). You may progressively increase your activity level and exercise. If an activity is uncomfortable, stop it and retry 3 days later. At 4 weeks time, you should be back to your full level of activities.

Driving and Return to Work/School: You may return to modified or light work duties 3 days after your surgery. Most employers/schools will accommodate modified duties. At 4 weeks time, there are no restrictions. You can drive and operate machinery only if you are not taking narcotics and you feel comfortable reacting to an emergency.

Follow-up and Emergencies: Call the office at 902.368.7610 to make a follow-up appointment for 4 weeks after surgery. If you have any problems or questions, do not hesitate to call the office. If you feel unwell or have fever, vomiting, or increasing pain then go to the emergency room.