

Laparoscopic Assisted Hysterectomy (LAVH) or Total Laparoscopic Hysterectomy (TLH) Postoperative Instructions

Discomfort - It is common to have some abdominal pain and cramping. You may take Ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) or Tylenol for discomfort unless you have any allergies to these medications. You may use stronger medications if prescribed. You may use a hot water bottle or heating pad on low setting for 20 minutes each time, 4 times a day for some relief for the discomfort.

Vaginal Bleeding - You may have some vaginal bleeding or spotting which may be heavy or light for 2 to 4 weeks; this is normal. Do not use tampons or douche until after your post-operative checkup. Nothing at all in the vagina until you are cleared by your surgeon (this includes local estrogen cream or vagifem).

Activity - Recovery following surgery will take approximately 6 weeks. For the first week after you go home, it is important to rest as your body heals, but do not spend prolonged periods of time laying flat or sitting, and try not to cross your legs at the knees. Walking is important to your recovery. It is normal to feel tired after minimal activity. Listen to your body and increase your activities gradually as tolerated. It is generally safe to climb **stairs**, but you may find that you may need to limit how often, if you are feeling weak or uncomfortable.

Lifting - Do not lift anything heavier than 10-15 pounds for 4 - 6 weeks.

Driving - Do not drive for 2 weeks. Use your seat belt. Do not drive while taking regular narcotic medication.

Intercourse - Do not have intercourse until after the post-operative visit (usually 6 weeks).

Exercise - Increase walking as you become more comfortable. Do not resume vigorous exercise until after the postoperative visit.

Shower - You may bathe or shower as you wish. If you have incisions, pat them dry afterwards then keep them clean and dry.

Diet - You may resume a regular diet when you are feeling well. You may have constipation over the next few weeks. If you do, eating foods high in fiber (fruit, vegetables, bran) may help. Be sure to drink 6 - 8 glasses of juice or water a day. If these do not help, you may buy Colace or Dulcolax (a stool softener) or Milk of Magnesia (laxatives) at the drug store. Avoid alcohol.

Emotional thoughts - Sadness, "the blues" and sleeping difficulties are common after any surgery or stress. If this continues for more than 2 weeks, call your doctor. If your ovaries were removed, you may be started on Estrogen during your recovery period. Please discuss this with your surgeon.

Work or School - Recovery is usually 4-6 weeks. Your physician will decide with you on an individual basis when you can return to your job.

Follow-up visit - **If you do not already have a postop visit arranged, call the office to arrange an appointment in 1 week if you have skin sutures/staples or otherwise in 2 and 6 weeks.**

Call us immediately at 647-0494 if you have -

- ❖ Temperature more than 100.5 degrees, or shakes or chills.
- ❖ Abdominal pain that is not relieved by rest or medication, or if the pain increases over time.
- ❖ Bleeding excessively (soaking a pad every 1 - 2 hours).
- ❖ Foul vaginal discharge.
- ❖ Burning or pain with urination or low back pains.
- ❖ Leg pain, swelling, redness or tenderness, especially if in one leg and not the other.

It is the hope of the professional staff at *Bedford Women's Care Associates* that your surgical experience has not been unduly stressful and that your recovery will be rapid and uneventful.