

Going Home After Gynecology Oncology Surgery

This handout will tell you what to expect after gynecology oncology surgery.

What to Expect

- You may have staples. They will be removed 10 to 14 days after surgery. This will be done by your local doctor or by the surgeon.
- Bleeding like a light period.
- Some nausea or vomiting.
- Weakness and fatigue for 4-6 weeks.

Nausea or Vomiting

To improve these symptoms:

- Eat small, frequent meals.
- Drink liquids an hour before or after a meal rather than with your meal.
- Avoid foods that are fatty, fried, or very spicy.
- Eat and drink slowly.
- Rest in a chair after eating. **Do not** lie flat for a few hours after you eat.

Activity

- Stay active, get up each day, and get dressed.
- Walk to keep up your strength.
- You can go out in public (shop, attend church, etc.), avoid people who are sick.
- **Avoid** heavy exercise and lifting over **10** pounds for 4 weeks.
- Pelvic rest for 6 weeks. **No** sex, douching, tampons, or putting anything into the vagina.
- **No** driving until you have stopped taking narcotic pain medicine.

Medicines

Go over your discharge planning instructions on resuming medicines. If you have any questions, please ask the doctor or pharmacist before going home.

If you have pain, use the prescribed pain medicine, or Tylenol[®] 650-1000 mg every 4 hours, or Advil[®] 400 mg every 4 to 6 hours. If you were prescribed Percocet[®], **do not** take Tylenol[®] along with Percocet[®].

Bowel Habits

Some pain medicine can cause constipation. If needed, take an over-the-counter stool softener (such as Colace[®]) 100 mg once or twice daily.

If you do not have a bowel movement within 48 to 72 hours after going home, try taking the laxative Senokot-S[®]. You can also buy this over the counter. Take 2 Senokot-S[®] tablets by mouth twice a day. You may increase your dose to 4 tablets twice a day if you don't have a bowel movement after the first two doses. Once you have had a bowel movement, stop or decrease the Senokot-S[®] and keep taking the Colace[®].

When to Call

- Fever over 100.4°F for two readings taken 4 hours apart.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Signs of infection such as redness, swelling, warmth or drainage.
- Pain not controlled with pain medicine.
- Vaginal bleeding that soaks more than one pad in one hour.
- No bowel movement for 3 or more days.
- Symptoms of bladder infection, such as burning or frequent urination.

Who to Call

Gynecology Oncology Clinic:
(608) 263-1548.

Monday - Friday, 8 am – 5 pm

After hours, nights and weekends, call the clinic line. Your call will forward to the paging operator. Ask for the Gynecology doctor on call. Give your name and phone number with the area code. The doctor will call you back.

The toll-free number: **1-800-323-8942.**

If you are a patient receiving care at UnityPoint – Meriter, Swedish American or a health system outside of UW Health, please use the phone numbers provided in your discharge instructions for any questions or concerns.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright © 6/2022 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#5628