

## Going Home After Gynecology Oncology Surgery

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

### What to Expect

- You may have staples that will be removed after 10 to 14 days by your local doctor or by your surgeon.
- You may have bleeding like a light period.
- You may have some nausea or vomiting.
- You will have 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. Don't lie flat for a few hours after you eat.

### Activity Guidelines

- Stay active, get up each day, and get dressed. Try walking to preserve and regain your strength.
- You can go out in public (shop, attend church) but avoid people who are sick.
- Avoid heavy exercise and lifting over **15 pounds** for 6 weeks.
- **Pelvic rest** for 6 weeks. This means no sex, douching, tampons, or putting anything into the vagina.
- No driving until you have stopped taking narcotic pain pills and can safely control the car.

### Medicines

Please refer to 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 pills, **or** Tylenol<sup>®</sup> 650-1000 mg every 4 hours, **or** Advil<sup>®</sup> 400 mg every 4 to 6 hours. If you were prescribed Percocet<sup>®</sup>, do not take Tylenol<sup>®</sup> along with Percocet<sup>®</sup>.

### Bowel Habits

Some pain pills can cause constipation. If needed, take a stool softener (such as Colace<sup>®</sup>) 100mg once or twice daily. You can buy this over the counter.

If you have no bowel movement within 48 to 72 hours after going home, try taking the laxative Senokot-S<sup>®</sup>. You can also buy this over the counter. Take 2 Senokot-S<sup>®</sup> 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<sup>®</sup> and keep taking the Colace<sup>®</sup>.

### 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  
Monday - Friday, 8 am – 5 pm  
**(608) 263-1548**

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 is **1-800-323-8942**.

The Spanish version of this *Health Facts for You* is #5628s.

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 © 6/2019. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#5628