

Laparoscopy

Laparoscopy is a visual exam of the soft parts of the body between the rib margins and the hips. It is often done to explore the body and help diagnose certain conditions. During the procedure, the doctor will make small incisions in your skin to pass different tools and cameras into the space. To increase visibility, gas or fluid may be used.

Getting Ready for Surgery

You may take a bowel prep to prepare for surgery. We will discuss the details with you. Your doctor will tell you how long before surgery to stop eating and drinking. Discuss with your doctor if there are any medications you need to stop taking before surgery.

After Surgery

- Expect some pain and bruising at the incisions.
- Your abdomen may be swollen for a few days.
- You may be tired and have muscle aches for a day or two.
- You may have mild nausea for a day or two.

Incision Care

- It is normal for incisions to be slightly puffy, numb, pink, and have a small amount of clear, light pink drainage.
- Expect the incisions to heal within 2 weeks.
- Keep incisions dry and covered for 48 hours (2 days) after surgery. Then, you may shower and wash them with mild soap (or approved antimicrobial soap) and water and pat dry. Do not soak in the bathtub, hot tub, or swim until they are healed.

- You do not have to wear a dressing unless wounds are in a skin fold, your clothes rub on them, or they are draining. If you wear a dressing, change it at least once a day and more often if it gets wet.

Activity

- **Do not** drive for the first 24 hours or if you are taking opioid pain pills.
- It is okay to resume your normal routine after 24 hours.
- Walking is good exercise for you after surgery. **Do not** resume other exercise without consulting with your doctor.
- **Do not** lift more than 10-15 pounds.
- Ask your doctor when you may resume sex.
- Avoid all tobacco and secondhand smoke.

Pain Relief

It is normal to have some pain. You may be taking opioid pain medicine to help improve your comfort. Opioids are a stronger pain medicine than what you can buy over the counter. You should only take them when you are in moderate to severe pain. Not everyone requires opioids for comfort. Most people will only need to take an over-the-counter medicine such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®). You may have aching in your neck and shoulders from the gas put into your abdomen. Using a heating pad to this area and/or walking may help relieve this pain better than medicines.

Diet

You will usually start eating clear liquids (Jell-O®, juice, broth) after surgery. As your bowel function starts to return (passing gas and having bowel movements) you will be

able to eat a regular diet. When you start eating, go slowly and only eat what feels and tastes good. If you begin to feel sick to your stomach or full, you should stop eating.

Prevent Constipation

A diet high in fluid and fiber can help prevent constipation. Be sure to drink 6-8 glasses of liquids each day. You may want to use a stool softener, docusate sodium (Colace®) and/or a bulk fiber laxative to prevent problems while you are taking pain pills and until you have your first bowel movement.

When to Call

- Nausea or vomiting for more than 24 hours.
- Check daily for signs of infection:
 - Increased redness or warmth of incisions.
 - Increased bloody or pus-like drainage from incisions.
 - Increase pain at the incision site.
 - Excess swelling or bleeding.
 - Fever (by mouth) above 100.4 ° F for 2 readings, taken 4 hours apart.
- Pain not controlled by pain pills.
- Excess bruising.
- If you have not had a bowel movement in 2-3 days, you may need a laxative.

Who to Call

Surgery Clinic
(608) 263-7502

This is a 24-hour number.

After hours, weekends and holidays, please ask for the doctor on call for
Dr. _____.

Leave your name and phone number with the area code. The doctor will call you back.

Toll-free number: **1-800-323-8942**.

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 © 11/2023 University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#5291