

Dear Patient:

Your doctor has scheduled you for a hysterectomy. During this surgery, the uterus is removed either through an abdominal incision or through the vaginal opening. The ovaries may or may not be removed. These decisions will be decided by you and your physician prior to the day of surgery.

Before your surgery

- ❖ **DO NOT** eat or drink anything after midnight on the night before the surgery.
- ❖ Remove all makeup, finger and toe nail polish, and jewelry before coming to the hospital. Remove piercings (earrings, tongue ring, etc.).
- ❖ When you arrive, you will be taken to your room to get undressed and into a hospital gown.
- ❖ Your doctor or a nurse anesthetist will visit with you regarding the anesthesia you will receive. Please tell the anesthetist if you have dentures or partials.
- ❖ You will have an IV started in the Same Day Surgery area.
- ❖ You will be taken to surgery about ½ hour prior to surgery.

During your surgery

The surgery takes about 1 - 2 hours. You will have a heart monitor and blood pressure cuff applied, and a pulse oximeter (measures the oxygen in your blood) placed on your finger. When your doctor is ready, the anesthetist will give medication through your IV which makes you sleep through the surgery. After you are asleep, your doctor will begin the surgery.

You will go to the recovery room to awaken from the anesthesia. You will be monitored in the recovery room for approximately 1 hour.

After your surgery

- ❖ You will be taken to your hospital room from the recovery room. You will be encouraged to cough and deep breathe frequently to keep your lungs clear.
- ❖ You will have an IV through which you will receive fluids and pain medication (through a CADD pump).
- ❖ You will have a tube (foley catheter) in your bladder which empties your bladder so you will not need to get up to the bathroom the day of your surgery. Usually this tube is removed the next day.
- ❖ Your incision will have staples covered by a dressing. This dressing will be removed the day after your surgery. The staples are usually removed and steri-strips applied prior to dismissal.

Pain/Medications: Your abdomen (if abdominal incision) or perineum (if vaginal hysterectomy) will be sore after your surgery. You will receive pain medication through your IV by a medication pump which you control. If you continue to have pain, please ask the nurse for more medication. **DO NOT** ask your family to push the medication control button. This will allow the nurse to better evaluate your pain.

Pain – (con't.) You can also support your abdomen with a small pillow when getting out of

bed or walking. Your doctor may order antibiotics to be given through your IV.

Diet: The first diet your doctor orders will include clear liquids such as sprite, jello, broth, decaf coffee, etc. Your diet will progress per doctor's orders.

Activity: You will be encouraged to be active after your surgery. The night of surgery your nurse will begin your activity by having you sit on the side of your bed. The day after surgery you can begin walking to the bathroom and sitting in a chair beside your bed. Walking about in the room or down the halls also speeds the healing process as well as decreasing complications associated with surgery.

Dismissal: You will need to have someone drive you home from the hospital. Go directly home and keep all follow-up appointments with your doctor.

After Dismissal

Activity: You will be encouraged to continue to walk when you go home. Short walks several times a day will speed up the healing process. You may ride in the car and climb stairs. You may tire easily and will need to rest 15 - 30 minutes between activities. **Do not** perform any strenuous activity such as lifting anything heavier than 10 lbs. If you have young children, avoid picking them up or carrying them. You may resume normal activities when permitted by your doctor. Do not drive until permitted by your doctor.

Incision: Keep the incision clean and dry. You can continue to shower, remembering to pat dry around the incision. Do not soak in the tub. **BE SURE TO LOOK AT YOUR INCISION EVERY DAY.** Notify your doctor if you notice bruising, redness, drainage, or increasing pain.

Pain/Medications: Your doctor may give you a prescription for pain medication to take at home. Take as directed. **DO NOT** take with alcohol. A non-aspirin pain reliever, such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen, may also be used for pain. If an antibiotic is prescribed, continue taking the antibiotic until it is gone.

Infection: If you have any of the following, call your doctor.

- ⊗ Redness or swelling around the incision
- ⊗ Yellowish, green or foul smelling drainage from your incision
- ⊗ Steady bleeding from your incision
- ⊗ Temperature above 101°
- ⊗ Chills or other flu like symptoms
- ⊗ Severe pain in the abdomen or anywhere in the body not being relieved by the pain medication
- ⊗ Persistent nausea and vomiting
- ⊗ Chest pain, trouble breathing, or difficulty urinating
- ⊗ Itching or a rash after taking your pain medication or antibiotic

Please refer to your dismissal instructions for further information.