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POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS MAJOR SURGERY

The following instructions are to be followed after having major gynecological surgery.

1. You may eat any diet you desire, but you are encouraged to stick with bland food (soups, pasta, cooked vegetables, oatmeal) that is easy to digest for the first week or two until your bowel movements return to normal. Avoid a lot of raw vegetables and salads at first, as these are hard to digest. If you develop "gas pain" once you are home, we recommend over the counter medications such as Mylicon or Gas-X. For constipation, we recommend Milk of Magnesia or a glycerin suppository. For more severe gas pain you may try Dulcolax tablets or suppositories or a Fleets enema.
2. You may take a bath or shower at any time. You may wash your hair. Your incision (if you had an abdominal operation) needs no special care and soap and water will not harm it.
3. During the first week at home, your activity should be similar to the hospital routine- periods of time out of bed, but frequent periods of rest. Two naps a day is the rule for the first week or two. You may walk as much as you like, but avoid getting overtired. Listen to your body- if it hurts, stop!
4. Your bladder sensation may not be normal immediately after surgery, especially if you have had prolapse and/or incontinence surgery. You are encouraged to attempt to void every 2-3 hours whether you feel the "urge" or not. This will prevent your bladder from becoming too full, which makes it harder for the bladder muscle to contract to empty your bladder. You do not have to set an alarm to void at night.
5. You may ride in a car at anytime- that is usually the way you will get home from the hospital. You may drive whenever you are off narcotics and can move your legs well enough to slam on the brakes in Atlanta traffic. For some this will be a few days and for others this will be 3-4 weeks.
6. No lifting of heavy objects, pushing, pulling, or heavy housework for at least a month after surgery. Depending on your type of surgery, these restrictions may be in place for several months and will be discussed at your postoperative office visits.
7. **No douching or sexual relations until you have been seen in the office.** Please continue with Sitz baths and stool softeners if you have been doing these in the hospital.
8. You may expect some vaginal spotting and/or a yellow discharge for several weeks after surgery. This may stop and then start again after about a month as the sutures in the vagina begin to dissolve. You may also pass some bits of suture material from time to time.
9. **Please call the office immediately if you have:**
 - a. Severe pain
 - b. Heavy bleeding (more than a period)
 - c. Chills or fever (temp > 100.5)
 - d. Inability to tolerate fluids by mouth, vomiting and/or a rigid abdomen
 - e. Your incision splits open, oozes pus, or becomes hot/red to touch
10. Make sure that you have scheduled your post surgical office visit. Usually, it is made when you schedule surgery. It's ok to call and double check.

Call with any questions or if you need advice. Our goal is to get you back to your normal activity and lifestyle as soon as possible. We wish you a healthy and speedy recovery.