POST-OPERATIVE PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS
LAPAROSCOPIC PROCEDURES

**Activities:** With a minimally invasive laparoscopic procedure you will recover much more quickly than with a standard open procedure. Your activity level should be gradually increased over the next 2 to 7 days depending on the extent of your procedure. It is normal to tire easily after surgery and you should maintain a flexible schedule and get adequate rest.

When you go home you may:

- Climb stairs
- Take a shower
- Drive after 72 hours
- Have sexual intercourse when you are comfortable; wait at least 5 days; 2 weeks if a hysterectomy was performed
- Perform light housework and cooking as tolerated
- Exercise in 5 to 10 days; swim in 7 days
- Douching IS NOT recommended
- Avoid lifting anything over 20 lbs. For 2 weeks
- Take over the counter pain medications such as Tylenol, Motrin, Advil, Aleve. If these are not sufficient, take your prescription pain medication as needed.

**Incision Care:** Laparoscopy incisions are typically very small and rarely have complications. You may wash the incisions with soapy water, then thoroughly dry the area and keep the skin dry. Dressings or band-aids are not necessary as exposure to oxygen in the air speeds healing. You may notice one or more stitches; these will fall off on their own, usually four weeks after the surgery. Itching, bruising, a pulling sensation, and/or numbness around the incisions are all normal. If any incision becomes hot, red, swollen or increasingly painful, please call your physician.

**Bowels:** The intestines are usually somewhat lazy for a few days after surgery causing gas, bloating and constipation. Drinking plenty of water, increasing fiber in your diet and walking are helpful. If constipated, you may try milk of magnesia, Metamucil or a Dulcolax suppository. If these methods do not result in a bowel movement within 48 hours, please call.

**Vaginal Bleeding:** You may have slight vaginal bleeding for 3 to 5 days after surgery. The bleeding should not be heavier than a normal period. Use pads only, NO TAMPONS. If you had a supracervical hysterectomy, occasionally a small amount of bleeding can occur at the time of your period and this may be annoying, but is normal.
Shoulder Pain: After laparoscopy pain behind your right shoulder blade can persist for a few days due to the air placed in your abdomen during the procedure. This will resolve with time, and lying flat usually helps.

If you have a temperature of 101 degrees or above, please call the office.

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