

Cholecystectomy Post-Op Instructions

Diet

- Start with clear liquids today to prevent nausea, then advance to a regular low-fat diet.
- If your stomach is upset, try bland, low-fat foods like plain rice, broiled chicken, toast, and yogurt. Drink plenty of fluids (unless your doctor tells you not to).
- If you have diarrhea, try avoiding spicy foods, dairy products, fatty foods, and alcohol. If the diarrhea continues for more than 1 week, call our office.

Medication

- If not allergic, please take 600mg ibuprofen and 1000mg acetaminophen together as tolerated with food every 6 hours. as needed for pain.
- Narcotic pain medication (oxycodone) can cause addiction and should only be used as needed if there is moderate to severe pain after the acetaminophen and ibuprofen are taken. You should minimize their use.
- Take pain medications as prescribed by your doctor. Take your pain medication with a small amount of food.
- Pain medications may constipate you. If you are feeling constipated, please take MiraLAX that you can get at any drugstore as directed on the bottle.

Activity

- Walking and climbing stairs are encouraged early after surgery.
- No strenuous activity for two (2) weeks.
- No heavy lifting for two (2) weeks.

Dressing

- Your incisions are closed with dissolvable sutures (stitches). Skin glue will cover your incisions. The skin glue will naturally slough off your skin. Do not rub, scratch, or pick at skin glue.
- No oils/lotions/creams over your incisions until the glue starts to flake off. At that point 1% hydrocortisone cream may be applied to relieve itching.
- You may shower or bathe 24 hours after your surgery. Clean with soap and water then pat dry gently.
- You may develop some redness immediately adjacent to your incisions as they heal which is normal.

What to Expect

- It is common to experience shoulder discomfort, chest tightness, bilateral shoulder discomfort for 24 to 48 hours after surgery, gradually this will go away. It is caused by carbon dioxide used to inflate your abdomen during the procedure. Carbon dioxide is a gas, and like all gases, travels upwards which irritates your diaphragm and causes referred pain to your shoulders.
- Soreness in the abdominal area like an ache you would feel after starting a new exercise program involving your abdominal muscles. This ache will gradually go away within a few days. Your abdomen may be distended for a few days after surgery.
- There may be a large black or blue area (bruise), on your abdomen to your hip. This may appear within the first week after surgery. It is caused by blood pooling under the skin from your surgery. Your body will reabsorb this blood over time. The bruise will turn yellow and disappear in time.
- You may feel sleepy, rest for the first 24 hours.
- You may have some nausea or vomiting the day of surgery, but this should not persist beyond the day AFTER surgery.
- You may have a sore throat from the tube that is used to help you breathe during general anesthesia.
- It may take a few days before you have a bowel movement. Bowel irregularity is expected with pain medication. Please take MiraLAX for constipation.
- You may also experience diarrhea, especially if eating foods high in fat. This should gradually resolve, allowing your diet to return to normal. If it persists, please call to make an appointment.

Sterile Suction Drain (JP Drain)

- If your gallbladder was infected, a tube may have been inserted in the incision to drain fluid out of the surgical site. The tube will have a bulb-like device at the end of the tube to collect the fluid. When you return for a postoperative visit, your doctor will remove the drain.

How to Empty the Sterile Suction Drain

- Before and after you empty the drain reservoir wash your hands well with soap and running water.
- Pay special attention to rubbing your fingers, fingernails, and the backs of your hands.
- Hand washing is an important step to help prevent infection. Empty your drain reservoir when you get up in the morning and before you go to bed at night.
- Pour the contents of the reservoir into the measuring cup, record the amount of drainage.
- Bring this record to your next visit with your doctor.
- Squeeze the sides of the reservoir to remove all air.
- Reinsert the cap.
- The drain works properly only when the sides are flattened, and a light suction is created.
- Pin the reservoirs to your clothing to prevent pulling on the tubing.

Miscellaneous

- No alcohol or driving for 24 hours after surgery or while taking pain medicine.
- Do not make any personal or business decisions for 24 hours.
- You should have a responsible adult with you for the rest of the day and night.

Possible Problems

Call Dr Bollins at 218-461-2212 if:

- Unable to drink liquids in the morning because of nausea.
- Unable to urinate eight hours after your surgery.
- Your temperature is greater than 101 degrees F.
- You notice excessive bleeding or unexpected drainage from the wound site.
- You notice extreme redness or warmth around your incision sites.
- You notice wound edges open or separate.
- Your pain is not relieved by pain medication.

If you feel it is an emergency, please go to the nearest emergency room.

Call your surgeon if you have any of the following symptoms:	When it Might Occur:	Possible Cause:
Severe right upper abdominal pain	Within 48 hours	Retained common bile duct stone, or post-op pain from muscle injury
Right upper abdominal pain increasing over time	Hours to days after the procedure	Delayed bleeding or bile leak
Yellow discoloration of skin or eyes (jaundice)	May occur weeks later	Gallstones in common duct
Temperature > 101 degrees F	Within two weeks	Infection within the abdomen or in one of the incisions

Follow-Up

- We will see you in our office 7-10 days after your surgery.
- If not already scheduled, please call 218-461-6240 to schedule a post-op visit.
- If you're a patient from **Ely** and your post-op visit has not already been scheduled, please call 218-365-8793.