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RECOVERING FROM ABDOMINAL OR VAGINAL SURGERY

1ST Week:

Spend as much time as possible up and moving about. Stairs are okay if taken slowly, and time outside is fine as well. Remember that you will fatigue much more quickly than before surgery and don't walk further than you can walk back. You may lift objects up to 10 – 15 pounds as long as it causes no discomfort. Riding in the car is fine, but if your trip will be longer than one hour, take time to stop and walk around the car every hour or so.

2nd Week:

Increase your activities as you stamina will allow. You may increase the amount you lift, using the same guidelines—if it hurts, don't do it.

Medications:

You will be sent home with a prescription for pain medication, plus hormones or antibiotics if those are necessary.

Driving:

You may drive when you are no longer requiring narcotic pain medications and when you can move your foot from the accelerator to the brake pedal without causing abdominal discomfort. This is simply a safety precaution—we don't want you driving if your reflexes are impaired by medications or your post-operative discomfort.

Bathing:

You may take a tub bath when you can safely get in and out of the tub; otherwise continue showers. Change your bandaids daily, and remove the steri-strips (if applicable) 8 – 10 days after surgery. If the strips come off prior to then you do not have to replace them.

Constipation can be prevented by drinking lots of fluid and taking a fiber-based stool softener such as Metamucil, Per Diem, Fibercon, or Konsyl. If you do become constipated, Dulcolax suppositories or tablets, Milk of Magnesia, or Magnesium Citrate (that special drink in the green bottle) will get your intestinal tract moving again.

Bleeding and Discharge are normal and to be expected for 4 – 6 weeks after hysterectomy. After 2 weeks have elapsed, you may use a vinegar/water douche if there is an odor to the discharge.

Warnings—Call the office if you have:

1. Temperature over 100.5
2. Heavy vaginal bleeding (greater than one soaked pad/hour)
3. Difficulty urinating, nausea/vomiting, or altered bowel function
4. Sudden onset of sharp pain that doesn't respond to your pain medication
5. Redness or drainage from your incision(s)

Post-operative Appointment:

Unless otherwise instructed for staple or suture removal, you need to be seen in the office 4 weeks after surgery. At that time, we will discuss the timing of your return to scheduled activities such as work or school.

Patient Signature

Nurse Signature

Today's Date: March 26, 2006