

HYSTERECTOMY

Hysterectomy is the surgical removal of the uterus, and may be performed as treatment for a number of medical conditions:

- Heavy or irregular menstrual bleeding
- Enlarging uterine fibroids
- Pelvic pain, or painful periods
- Prolapse of the uterus (a condition where the uterus falls into the vagina due to weakened ligaments)
- Cancer of the female organs

Hysterectomy is generally performed by one of two approaches: either through an abdominal incision or through a vaginal approach. Sometimes a laparoscopically assisted vaginal hysterectomy is performed, using laparoscopy to aid in a portion of the surgery. Traditionally, vaginal hysterectomy, or laparoscopically assisted vaginal hysterectomy allow for a shorter recovery time and often less post operative pain. Discuss with your doctor which of these methods is right for you.

Removal of the tubes and ovaries may sometimes be performed along with hysterectomy, especially if the patient is near or past menopause. Patients who have their ovaries removed at hysterectomy may need to consider hormone replacement therapy to reduce symptoms of hot flashes and vaginal dryness.

Hysterectomy is a common and safe surgical procedure, but is associated with some risk. These risks are the potential for infection, bleeding, injury to the bowel or bladder, injury to blood vessels, and injury to the ureter (the tube which carries urine from the kidney to the bladder). In addition, there may be loss of hormone production from the ovaries. Remember, this procedure will leave you sterile and unable to have future pregnancy.

Post-operative instructions are also available in this website for those patients who will or have had hysterectomy.