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# Discharge Instructions for Laparoscopic Hysterectomy

You had a procedure called laparoscopic hysterectomy. A surgeon removed your uterus using instruments inserted through small incisions in your abdomen. These incisions may be sore. You may also have pain in your upper back or shoulders. This is from the gas used to distend your abdomen to allow your healthcare provider to see inside your pelvis and do the procedure. This pain usually goes away in a day or two. It usually takes 1 to 4 weeks to recover from laparoscopic hysterectomy. But recovery time varies. Here's what you can do to speed your recovery after surgery.

Your surgeon may have done this procedure using a surgical robot. This is when the surgeon guides a special robot instead of guiding the surgical instruments by hand. This is commonly called robotic surgery. Robotic surgery also uses several small incisions. Recovery is generally the same as for laparoscopy.

## Home care

- Continue the coughing and deep breathing exercises that you learned in the hospital.
- Take your medicines exactly as directed by your healthcare provider.
- Prevent constipation:
  - Eat fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
  - Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water a day, unless told to do otherwise.
  - Use a laxative or a mild stool softener if your healthcare provider says it's OK.
- Shower as usual. Wash your incisions with mild soap and water. Pat dry.
- Don't use oils, powders, or lotions on your incisions.
- Don't put anything in your vagina until your healthcare provider says it's safe to do so. Don't use tampons or douches. Don't have sex.
- If you had both ovaries removed, report hot flashes, mood swings, and irritability to your healthcare provider. There may be medicines that can help you.

## Activity

- Ask your healthcare provider when you can start driving again. It's usually OK to drive as soon as you are free of pain and able to move comfortably from side to side. Don't drive while you are still taking opioid pain medicine.
- Ask others to help with chores and errands while you recover.
- Don't lift anything heavier than 10 pounds for 6 weeks.
- Don't do strenuous activities, such as exercise, housework, or yardwork, until your healthcare provider says it's OK.

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- Walk as often as you feel able.
  - Climb stairs slowly and pause after every few steps.

## **Follow-up care**

Make a follow-up appointment, if directed.

## **When to call your healthcare provider**

Call your healthcare provider right away if you have any of the following:

- Fever of 100.4° F ( 38°C) or higher, or as directed by your healthcare provider
- Chills
- Bright red vaginal bleeding or vaginal bleeding that soaks more than one sanitary pad per hour
- A foul-smelling discharge from the vagina
- Trouble urinating, leaking urine, or burning when you urinate
- Severe pain or bloating in your abdomen
- Redness, swelling, or drainage at your incision sites
- Shortness of breath or chest pain
- Nausea and vomiting
- Pain, swelling, and redness in one of your legs