

Abdominal or Vaginal Hysterectomy

After Visit Summary

This is general information. Please see your After Visit Summary for how to take care of yourself after surgery.

Your health care team will work with you to understand any challenges you have after your hospital stay. This will help your team work toward a plan to make sure you have the right care and support to help manage your health after you leave the hospital.

Your Surgery

Your surgeon will remove your uterus, fallopian tubes, and, possibly, your ovaries through your vagina (birth canal) or abdomen.

Before the Procedure

- Tell your health care provider if you:
 - are pregnant
 - have a latex allergy
 - have diabetes
 - take a blood-thinner medicine.
- Remove any jewelry or piercings.
- Arrange to have someone drive you home. You will not be able to drive after the procedure.

Your Incision

It is normal for your incision to take 4 to 6 weeks to heal. It is important to take care of your incision.

- Steri-Strips® (paper-like tape) may have been placed on your incision. They can get wet in the shower. You may peel them off after 7 days.
- Follow any directions your health care provider gives you.

If You Have a Urinary Drain

- Follow your health care provider's directions for how to care for a urinary drain.

Pain Relief

- Take any prescription or over-the-counter medicine as directed.

(over)

Activity

- Slowly return to your regular level of activity. Save your energy by spreading out activities that make you tired. Rest as needed.
- Rest is as important as exercise. When you feel tired, your body is telling you to rest for a while. Some days you will have more energy than others.
- There may be times when you feel “blue” or “down.” This is normal. However, if these feelings last for more than 2 weeks, or if these feelings become more intense, you will need to call your doctor.
- Do not lift anything that weighs more than 20 pounds for 6 weeks. (A full gallon of milk weighs 9 pounds.)
- Your health care provider will tell you when it’s OK for you to shower, drive, return to work and have sex.
- Avoid tobacco and secondhand smoke. They can slow your recovery.

Food and Beverages

- Eat well-balanced meals. Follow any instructions your health care provider gave you.
- Drink more fluids.
- Avoid alcohol while you are taking prescription pain medicine.

When To Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider if you have:

- a temperature of 101 F or higher
- any new or increased pain not relieved by pain medicine
- any signs of infection:
 - increasing redness
 - swelling
 - tenderness
 - warmth
 - change in appearance or increased drainage
- pain or burning while you urinate
- inability to urinate
- constipation not relieved by changing your eating habits or taking laxatives. (It is normal to have changes in your bowel habits. Pain medicines can cause constipation.)
- any questions or concerns.

Follow-up Appointment

Please keep all follow-up appointments with your health care provider or specialist, even if you are feeling well.