

IMMEDIATELY AFTER SURGERY:

You will feel groggy and lethargic and possibly nauseous from the anesthesia.
Your incisions will be sore (especially abdominal and near rectum (for up to 4 weeks or more)
Your appetite will be decreased
You may feel gassy or swollen

YOU NEED TO WALK FOR 5 MINUTES EVERY 2-3 HOURS WHILE AWAKE BECAUSE:

It prevents blood clots
It forces you to take deep breaths to expand the lungs and prevent pneumonia
It gets the bowels moving

DO NOT LIFT ANYTHING HEAVIER THAN 10 POUNDS (a gallon of milk)

No strong pushing or pulling action.
Do not vacuum the carpet, scrub the floor, lift the laundry basket or large bags of groceries.
Hold a pillow against your stomach when getting out of bed or coughing

NO STRENUOUS EXERCISE including jumping, jogging, or abdominal crunches. Walking and other exercise is often fine and in fact recommended. Place a hand on the abdomen to see if your abdominal muscles are straining during exercise; if they are you should avoid that activity.

AVOID CONSTIPATION:

Anaesthesia, Surgery itself, especially open abdominal surgery, Pain Medications, and alterations in the foods you eat and the amount you exercise all can contribute to constipation.

DO: eat fruits and vegetables, drink lots of water, use a stool softener like colace, take Alleve 2 tabs twice a day to lessen the amount of prescription pain medication you need

DO: use laxatives, milk of Magnesia, Metamucil, or suppositories if you feel backed up or have not had a bowel movement in several days

DON'T: restrict your fluids or sit still, this worsens constipation.

NO SEXUAL ACTIVITY OR USE OF TAMPONS UNTIL YOUR DOCTOR GIVES YOU THE OK (usually about 4-6 weeks). If you are using vaginal hormones before surgery, please continue, this facilitates healing.

Use your common sense. Your body will generally tell you the right thing to do. If it hurts, STOP IT. If you feel wiped out, REST.

MEDICATIONS

Take Aleve (2 tabs twice a day) or Ibuprofen regularly to lessen your need for Narcotics
Take the prescription pain medications as directed as needed (take enough to be comfortable walking around)
Continue to use the vaginal hormone 2-3 times/week if you are post-menopausal (facilitates healing)

FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT:

Call and make an appointment to see your surgeon in 1 to 2 weeks.

You can resume driving if you are off all pain medications and can move freely without pain.

For vaginal or laparoscopic surgery this can be 3-7 days or longer
For open abdominal surgery this may be 3-4 weeks after surgery
For slings it usually is just a few days

When to Call the Physician:

Temperature greater than 101 degrees° F.
Redness or drainage of pus from the incision site.
Nausea or vomiting that persists more than 12 hours.
Worsening abdominal or vaginal/perineal pain (should slowly improve not worsen).
Severe leg pain or swelling.