

BENRUS SURGICAL

AT BARNES-JEWISH ST. PETERS

Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy (Gallbladder) After Care Instructions

What to Purchase Before Surgery (over the counter)

- Colace (docusate) 100 mg. **FOR CONSTIPATION IF NEEDED** (DO NOT purchase Peri-Colace which is a stimulant)
- Miralax **FOR CONSTIPATION IF NEEDED**
- Advil 200 mg (to supplement the pain medication)

What to Expect When You Go Home

- You may experience some nausea, vomiting, or dizziness, but that should resolve by tomorrow.
- You may experience a sore throat from the tube used in your throat when receiving general anesthesia. Keeping your throat moist with lozenges and drinking fluids will help.
- You may experience bilateral shoulder discomfort for 24-48 hours. This is caused from the carbon dioxide gas used to inflate your abdomen during the surgery.
- Your abdomen may be distended or bloated for a few days after your surgery.
- No alcohol or driving for 3 days after surgery or while you are still on the pain medication.

Medications

- You have been given a prescription for pain medication, take as directed on the bottle, and take with food or snack.
- You may have been given a prescription for nausea, take as directed on the bottle.
- Our physicians typically write a sufficient quantity of pain medication for your surgery; however, if you need a refill of your narcotic pain medication call the office between 9:00 am-4:00 pm. We cannot refill narcotic pain medications in the evening or on weekends. Narcotics require a written prescription which needs to be picked up at our office, and taken to your pharmacy.
- If your primary care physician allows you to take Advil (Ibuprofen) then take it as follows: Advil 200 mg 1-2 tablets every 6 hours, not to exceed 6 tablets (1200 mg.) in a 24 hour period. Alternate the Advil between the doses of the pain medication, and be sure to take it with food or snack. Advil is an anti-inflammatory medication, and can help reduce inflammation.
- Do **NOT** supplement your narcotic pain medication with Tylenol, as there is acetaminophen in your pain medication.
- If you take any blood thinners listed below, be sure to talk to your surgeon. He or she will tell you when to re-start taking those medications again.

Aspirin	Coumadin (warfarin)
Plavix (clopidogrel)	Jantoven (warfarin)
Brilinta (ticagrelor)	Pradaxa (dabigatran)
Effient (prasugrel)	Xaralto (rivaroxaban)
	Eliquis (apixaban)

Bowel Movements

The use of narcotic pain medications can make you very constipated. Not drinking enough fluids contributes to constipation as well. We do not want you to strain to have a bowel movement.

- If you have not experienced a bowel movement two days after your gallbladder removal then start Colace (docusate) 100 mg. 1 to 3 tablets per day, it will help soften the stool and prevent constipation while you are on the pain medications. You may stop Colace if your stools become loose, or you resume normal bowel movements.
- If you still have not experienced a bowel movement, you may start MiraLax 1 capful in an 8 ounce glass of water twice a day, in addition to the Colace. The same instruction applies, if your stools become loose or you resume normal bowel movements, you may stop the Miralax.
- Drink plenty of water, at least (eight) 8 ounce glasses per day, which is the “8 x 8” rule making it very easy to remember! This will help with constipation from taking the pain medications.
- If you still do not have a bowel movement after you have tried the above regimen then call the office at (636) 441-2122 for further instructions.
- You may experience diarrhea after having your gallbladder removed, especially if eating foods high in fat. This should gradually resolve, but may take several weeks to return to normal.

Diet

- You may eat a light meal the evening of surgery, and advance to a regular diet the next day.
- Avoid heavy or fatty foods for 7 days after surgery as those foods may cause temporary nausea or diarrhea.

Dressing and Wound Care

- There will be 4 to 5 small incisions across the abdominal area. Typically these are closed with dissolvable suture on the inside and special surgical glue over the incision. The surgical glue will dissolve on its own, DO NOT attempt to remove it.
- You may shower the day after your surgery, pat the incisions with a soapy washcloth, let the water run over the incisions, and pat dry when you get out of the shower.
- DO NOT soak in water such as a bathtub, hot tub, swimming pool, or lake for the first week after surgery.

Activity

- Rest for the first 24 hours, and when you feel tired.
- Start walking the next day, gradually increase your activity.
- No strenuous activity or heavy lifting for 2 weeks.
- NO DRIVING while on narcotic pain medications.

When to Call 911

- You have sudden chest pain, shortness of breath, or cough up blood.

When to Call your Doctor.....Office Number (636) 441-2122

- Excessive pain that does not get better after you take your pain medication.
- Excessive swelling and / or bleeding that soaks 2 or more large gauze pads.
- Temperature above 101.5 degrees F.
- Incision is red, and hot to the touch.
- Foul smelling drainage.
- Severe right upper abdominal pain that is getting worse.
- Bowel movements that are black or pale gray in color.
- Yellow discoloration of the skin or eyes.
- Persistent nausea or vomiting.
- If you have had no bowel movement after following the instructions outlined in the Bowel Movement section above.

Call for Post-op Appointment.....Office Number (636) 441-2122

- Please call the office the day after your surgery to schedule your post-op appointment for 1 to 2 weeks from the date of your surgery.