



## ***Post-Op Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy Instructions***

You have had your gallbladder removed laparoscopically (via keyhole surgery). During your procedure, the surgeon made 2 to 4 small incisions – one near the bellybutton and the others elsewhere on your abdomen. Through one incision the surgeon inserted a thin tube with a camera attached (a laparoscope). Surgical tools were inserted in the other incisions.

You may feel discomfort in your shoulder and chest for up to 48 hours after surgery. This is normal and is caused by carbon dioxide gas used during the procedure. It will go away.

There is no need for a special diet after the operation, you can live a full life doing the things and eating the foods you enjoyed prior to the removal of your gallbladder, unless advised otherwise by a nutritionist.

### **HOME CARE**

- Ø Don't drive unless you are completely pain-free and no longer on pain meds
- Ø Avoid constipation caused by painkillers / antibiotics by either following nutritionist advice (if consulted) or using a softener available OTC from your pharmacy, e.g. Movicol, for as long as you take the analgesia
- Ø Don't lift anything heavier than 10kg for 1-2 weeks post-op
- Ø Follow your regular diet, but it is advisable to avoid rich, spicy or greasy food for a few days
- Ø Do walk around normally from a day or 2 post-op
- Ø Sexual activity is fine if tolerable – if it hurts, STOP
- Ø It takes about 1 week for you to get most of your strength and energy back
- Ø Make an appointment to talk to your surgeon if the following symptoms don't cease within a week post-op:
  - Fatigue
  - Pain around the incision/s
  - Diarrhoea or constipation
  - Loss of appetite

### **WOUND CARE**

- Ø Leave the dressings on for +- 5 days. Wash the skin around the incisions daily with liquid soap & water. It's ok to shower the day after the surgery but do not soak the dressings. Stitches will dissolve and don't need to be removed. Once dressings are off, leave the Steri-strips underneath in place if they still stick to the skin, or remove them gently if they are loose. Clean wound sites gently with soap and water (do not soak) and apply a new dressing for +- 4 days. Do not use anything else e.g. Dettol, Savlon, Bactroban unless explicitly directed to do so by Dr. Adherent Steri-strips can be removed after 10-14 days, keep them covered in the meantime. After that only apply a dressing if needed. If a wound has opened please let us know; it is not necessarily a cause for concern.
- Ø Once the wound is completely closed you can massage it with a scar treatment to reduce the appearance of the scar

### **WHEN TO CALL YOUR DOCTOR**

Call the practice (or go to Casualty if Dr isn't available) immediately if you have any of the following:

- Ø Jaundice
- Ø Chills
- Ø Redness, swelling, increasing pain, pus or a foul smell at the incision site
- Ø Fever of 38°C or higher
- Ø Increasing abdominal pain, constipation, nausea or vomiting

***It takes 5-7 working days to get the test results from the laboratory.***

**Follow-up appointments are not required unless something seems wrong or if you are concerned about something. If that is the case please feel free to contact the rooms for assistance.**