

# Discharge information

# Vulval surgery



Western Health

## Introduction

- After vulval surgery you may go home the same day or you may be admitted to hospital for 1-2 nights. However, everyone is different, and our bodies will recover in different ways.
- It is important to try not to be in too much of a hurry and instead slowly increase the amount that you do. Try to strike a balance, listen to your body and only do as much as feels comfortable.
- In the first couple of days after your operation you may feel a little flat or emotional. This varies from woman to woman and is entirely normal. It may be caused by hormonal changes, the anaesthetic, or your feelings about the surgery in general.

## Pain

- You may still need to take pain relief after discharge from hospital.
- If you take regular pain relief (i.e paracetamol and/or ibuprofen) then it will allow you to move around more easily and sleep better.
- You may be prescribed stronger pain relief. You should use this when the regular pain relief isn't enough.
- Do not drink alcohol, drive, or perform other activities that require concentration while taking stronger pain relief.

## Constipation

- You may experience constipation after surgery, especially if you are taking strong pain relief.
- It is important to try and avoid becoming constipated, as you should not be straining after surgery.
- When you are taking stronger pain relief it is recommended that you take either; Coloxyl and Senna, Movicol, lactulose, or Nulax to prevent constipation – you can purchase these from your local pharmacy.
- Pear or prune juice can also reduce the constipation effects of strong pain relief.

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## Wound care

- You may have some light bleeding or spotting for a few days after surgery. It should become less in volume every day. You will need to wear a sanitary pad as required.
- Keep the area clean and dry
  - Baths>Showers 2-3 times a day are advisable.
  - Salt baths (1 tablespoon of salt in a shallow bath of only water) can be particularly helpful.
  - To dry your wound after bathing; gently pat it dry with a clean towel
- Avoid swimming (either in the sea or a pool), spas, applying lotions, powders or fragrances etc. for 6 weeks.

## Activity

- During the first few weeks you may need to have rest periods throughout the day before gradually resuming your usual activities.
- You must not do any heavy lifting for 6 weeks. This includes shopping bags, washing baskets, moving furniture, vacuuming, mopping floors, pushing shopping trolleys etc.
- If you need to lift, squat at the knees rather than bending over.
- Wait until your follow up appointment before resuming strenuous activity such as aerobics, gym, running, contact sports etc.
- You should not drive
  - If you are in pain
  - If you are taking strong painkillers
  - If you do not feel confident that you could perform an emergency stop if needed.
- Some insurance companies place restrictions on driving after surgery/procedures, so check your policy details.

## Sexual intercourse

- You are advised to avoid sexual activity for 6-8 weeks.

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## Diet

- Resume your normal diet.
- Drink plenty of fluids, including 6-8 glasses of water per day.

## When to seek advice

- Visit your local doctor if you have any:
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Develop an offensive discharge
  - Pain that is not controlled by regular pain relief
  - Painful urination
- Present to the Emergency Department if:
  - Fever >38 degrees
  - Excessive nausea and vomiting
  - Excessive pain
  - Excessive bleeding from the vagina

## Follow up

A follow up appointment in the gynaecology outpatient's department has been requested. If you have not received this within 10-14 days please call (03) 83451727.

Please note that this information is not meant to replace any specific instructions that you receive from your Doctor. Please follow your Doctor's advice at all times.

**FOR AN EMERGENCY: CALL AN AMBULANCE ON 000**  
Alternate contact: Nurse on call - 1300 606 024