



WOMEN'S HEALTH  
SPECIALISTS  
OF ADVANTIA

## Instructions After Major Vulvar Surgery

### Activity

- Take it easy for the first week after your surgery! Someone should be available to help care for you the first few days.
- You can walk around as much as you like. Do not over do it—no long hikes.
- You can go up and down stairs. Take one step at a time, take your time and plan your day to try to limit the number of times you need to use the stairs.
- Avoid heavy lifting (more than twenty pounds).
- If an activity hurts, you should not be doing it.
- You should be back to fairly normal activity after 2 to 4 weeks.
- You should not do any heavy lifting or vigorous exercise. After six weeks consult the doctor to discuss when you may resume these activities.
- You should not drive your car for two weeks after returning home. You may take short trips if someone else drives.
- After six weeks, you can do anything that is comfortable for you. If an activity still hurts, do not do it.
- Sexual relations may be resumed in 6 weeks (or when advised).
- You can plan to return to work after 4-6 weeks if you do not have to lift, strain or stand for long periods of time.
- It is normal to experience some fatigue as you start to increase your activities. Some days will be better than others. Be patient with yourself. Over the next few weeks you will gradually increase your energy level and return to your normal lifestyle.

### Wound Care

- Shower as usual. You may fill the pericare bottle with warm water and gently cleanse area. No tub baths for 4 weeks.
- Cleanse the surgical area after each time you urinate or have a bowel movement with your pericare bottle filled with water.
- Take sitz baths in plain water or in mild soap and water 3-4 times a day.
- Blow dry perineum after each cleansing.
- Try to keep area open to air as much as possible. No binding clothing. Cotton panties are preferred.
- Call the office if you notice purulent or foul smelling drainage.
- Do not use tampons to absorb vaginal blood or drainage. No douching.
- You may have some vaginal bleeding or spotting for 6 weeks.

### Diet

- You may have regular foods as tolerated. A well-balanced diet promotes healing.
- If you experience indigestion, you should avoid foods containing a lot of fat (dairy products, red meat, and fried or spice foods) and large or heavy meals.

## **Pain**

- You will have some vulvar discomfort after your surgery. You will be given a prescription for narcotic pain medication before you leave the hospital. The specific instructions will be on the prescription.
- Start by taking, Ibuprofen over the counter, 600 mg every 6 hours as needed. If you are still in pain, take the narcotic prescription in addition to ibuprofen.
- **DO NOT DRIVE AFTER TAKING NARCOTIC PAIN MEDICATION!!**

## **Constipation**

- Constipation is not unusual after surgery. Pain medication tends to slow your bowels and pain tends to keep you from straining to have a bowel movement--both may contribute to constipation.
- Take Miralax over the counter, 1-2 capfuls daily to prevent constipation. Once you have regular bowel movements, start a daily stool softener (ex Colace 100 mg daily – over the counter) for 4 weeks.
- Drink at least 6-8 full glasses of fluids a day.
- Eat a high bulk diet.
- If necessary, take milk of magnesia (two tablespoons).
- Do not take any medication for diarrhea without prior contact with our office.

## **Notify our office if any of the following occurs:**

- Increased pain, redness, or swelling in the surgical area.
- Pain or burning with urination or frequent urge to urinate.
- Bleeding from surgical area.
- Drainage from surgical area that is purulent or has a foul odor.
- Fever greater than 100.6
- Nausea, vomiting, or inability to have a bowel movement.
- Headache, muscle aches, dizziness or a general ill feeling.
- Shortness of breath, calf pain, or swelling in your extremities.

**If you do not currently have a post-op appointment scheduled, please call the office to schedule a visit for approximately 2-3 weeks after your date of surgery**