



# Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy

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## **Are there any diet restrictions?**

- Return to your same diet as before surgery.
- Add fats slowly.
- Avoid constipation by drinking plenty of water and caffeine-free fluids. Take stool softener while you are taking prescribed pain medication.

## **When can I go back to normal activities?**

- No lifting anything greater than 5 -10 pounds for 2 weeks. This includes strenuous activities such as vacuuming, lifting children, groceries, laundry, moving furniture, mowing lawns, sports activities, etc.
- No driving for 3-4 days after surgery or while taking narcotic pain medication. You may ride as a passenger.
- Walk as much as tolerated. You may climb stairs in moderation.
- Resume sexual activity in 2 weeks or as discussed with your physician.

## **How will I care for my incision?**

- Remove dressing 24 hours after surgery.
- You may shower; gently wash incisions and pat dry. Leave open to the air and dry. Do not use powders or creams. No tub baths, hot tubs, or swimming until the incisions are completely healed.
- Steri-strips may be present on your incisions. These will fall off in about 1-2 weeks. Do not pull off earlier.
- Avoid tight clothing around your incisions or fabrics which may irritate the skin. Wear loose comfortable clothing.

## How will I manage my pain at home?

You can expect to have some pain after surgery. This is a normal part of the recovery process. This pain is more tolerable for some patients and less tolerable for others.

You will receive a prescription for a strong pain medication (painkiller) that contains opioids (strong pain medicines, also called “narcotics”). Keep in mind that about **half** of patients who have this surgery need 5 pills or less to manage their after-surgery pain. Most patients have stopped taking the medication by 5 days after surgery.

- Start with over-the-counter medications such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Motrin®, Advil®), which may be all you need to control your pain.
- If your pain is not controlled with over-the-counter medications, take only as much of the prescription painkiller as you need.
- As your pain goes down start taking less of the prescription painkiller and use Tylenol®, Advil®, or Motrin® instead. This is called “tapering off”.
- **Do not drink alcohol or drive** while taking narcotic pain medication

For your safety and the safety of others follow these instructions:

- Store opioids in a **locked cabinet**, out of reach of children.
- Do not keep leftover pain medications after your pain is gone. **Safely dispose** of pain medications you no longer need .
- Visit the website “Protect Your Community: Drug Disposal Information and Resources” and type in your location under the map to find locations to dispose of leftover medication: <http://umhealth.me/takebackmap>

## When should I notify my doctor?

Department of General Surgery  
Laparoscopic Cholecystectomy

Call your doctor if you have any of the following signs and symptoms:

- Fever above 101°F
- Significant increase in wound pain or discomfort
- Excessive redness, swelling, or drainage from the incision sites.
- The incisions begin to open
- Change in overall health; nausea, vomiting, chills, profuse sweating, diarrhea, constipation
- Whites of eyes or skin turning yellow

### **What would be my follow-up care?**

- You will return to the clinic for your follow-up visit about two weeks after surgery. If you have not already received an appointment, we will make one for you . You will receive notification by mail.
- If your laparoscopic procedure is converted to an open cholecystectomy you will stay hospital for a few days. Your lifting restrictions will be extended to 6 weeks.

### **Who do I contact if I have questions?**

- Nurse Clinician- 734-936-5781 (Monday-Friday)
- SGI Resident on-call (after hours, holidays) through hospital paging- 734-936-6267

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