
TOTAL ABDOMINAL HYSTERECTOMY (TAH) **POST OP INSTRUCTIONS**

You have had a TAH (total abdominal hysterectomy). This is a procedure to remove your uterus and maybe your ovaries and/or fallopian tubes through an abdominal incision. You will either have a horizontal incision in the lower abdomen or a vertical incision from your navel to your pubic bone. The incision may have been closed either with dissolvable sutures (no removal necessary) or staples (removal needed and you will be instructed on when these need to be removed). There may be Steri-Strips covering the incision and if so, they can be removed in 7-10 days; do not be concerned if they fall off earlier. You can shower as usual as soon as you get home and there is no need to cover the incision again.

You may take Tylenol or over the counter Ibuprofen (as long as you do not have any allergies or sensitivities to these medications) as well as the prescription pain medicine that was given to you. Since many of the anesthetic and pain medications used around the time of your surgery cause constipation, you should take a stool softener (available over the counter) once or twice daily until you feel your bowels are back to normal.

You may notice some abdominal bruising. This bruising is usually associated with your incision but may extend over the entire abdomen for the first week. This is normal and will resolve in approximately 10-14 days. There will also be a light to moderate amount of vaginal bleeding for 10-14 days. Some light staining may continue for up to 4 weeks after the surgery. You should refrain from strenuous activity, swimming, bathing and sexual intercourse for 6 weeks from the procedure. You can increase non-strenuous activity as soon as you feel well enough to do so and you can return to work when your doctor has advised you to do so.

You need a follow-up appointment in 4-6 weeks after the procedure. You should already have that appointment scheduled but if you don't, please call the office at 978-927-4800 as soon as you get home. You will be notified of any pathology from the surgery in 7-10 days.

If you experience any of the following:

- Temperature greater than 100.4 degrees
- Severe nausea or vomiting (lasting longer than 8 hours after surgery)
- Heavy vaginal bleeding
- Profuse or persistent incisional drainage
- Severe, crushing chest pain

you should contact the office during office hours at 978-927-4800. If you have an urgent problem related to the surgery, and feel that you cannot wait until office hours, please call the above number and ask to speak to the on-call doctor.