

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR LAPAROSCOPIC CHOLECYSTECTOMY SURGERY

Now that you are being discharged there are some general instructions following your laparoscopic cholecystectomy.

1. Wound Care

Most patients will have their wounds closed with dissolving sutures and they shall have dressings that have been placed over these wounds. The dressings are usually water resistant though not truly waterproof. I would recommend that you wash yourself rather than sit in a bath for the first 3 or 4 days. Following this, I am happy for the dressings to be removed and possibly some disinfectant to be applied to the wound.

The commonest problem following surgery is a wound infection and if the wounds were to become very red, sore or were painful I would recommend that you contact either your local doctor or try and contact myself as you may be developing a wound infection.

2. Diet

Most patients after this operation find that in the first week or so it is best to eat a fairly bland diet, consisting mainly of foods that are not rich or spicy. Gradually, as ones confidence grows, a slightly more adventurous diet can be introduced. Generally, rich foods are best avoided in the first three weeks. A small percentage will find they have a fatty food intolerance and this will often improve over a period of several months.

3. General Health

Most patients find that their energy levels are significantly reduced following the surgery. In time, energy levels usually return to normal. I would recommend patients initially in the first week try and walk and gradually increase the distances that are walked each day. I am happy for some light lifting to be introduced after a few days and this can be gradually increased. It is best to avoid lifting heavy things for a period of up to 3 weeks after the operation. I usually do not recommend patient return to active physical work within 3 weeks of the operation. If a patient feels well enough to embark upon work performed at a desk, I am happy for this to occur 2 weeks after the operation.

4. Pain

Generally, pain is subsiding at the time of discharge. Normally pain can be managed with simple analgesics such as Panadol or Digesic. If a patient develops worsening abdominal pain I would recommend that you contact your local Doctor or ring the Hospital where your surgery was performed and I or the covering Doctor can be contacted. The occasional patient will have problems after discharge and there is always a General Surgeon that is available to see patients if they develop major problems following surgery.

5. Follow up

Some patients will need a post-operative test following surgery. Usually this will have been discussed with the patient prior to discharge. Usually an appointment will need to be organised at or about the time of discharge for this test to be done.