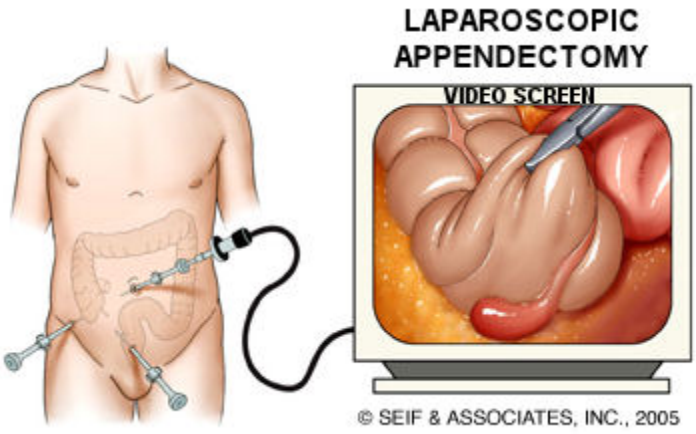
Appendectomy
Care After

An appendectomy is the removal of your appendix through a cut (*incision*) in your belly (*abdomen*).

HOME CARE

- Put an ice pack on the surgical site for the first 1 or 2 days. This may help with pain and puffiness (*swelling*).
  - Put the ice in a plastic bag.
  - Wrap the bag in a towel or cloth.
  - Use the ice pack 3 to 4 times per day for 15 to 20 minutes each time.
- Keep the wound clean and dry. The wound may be washed gently with soap and water. Gently blot or dab dry after cleaning.
- **Do not** shower for 2 days after surgery. You may take sponge baths during this time.
- **Do not** take baths, use swimming pools, or use hot tubs for 10 days, or as told by your doctor.
- Only take medicine as directed by your doctor.



- You may notice a change in your poops (*bowel movements*). You may have 1 to 3 loose or watery poops (*diarrhea*) a day. Or, you may not be able to poop (*constipated*). Your bowels will slowly get back to normal.
- **Do not** drink anything with bubbles (*carbonation*). It may give you gas pain.
- **Do not** drink beer, wine, or hard liquor. It slows healing and should not be combined with pain medicines.
- Small meals are best for the first few days.
- Gradually add food and fluids to your diet.
- **Do not** lift anything heavier than 10 pounds/4.5 kilograms (about the weight of a gallon of milk) for 2 weeks.
- Support your stomach when you cough. A pillow works well to brace yourself.
- **Do not** do anything that makes you very tired for at least 6 weeks.
- Get plenty of rest periods. Sleep when you feel tired. This helps your body heal.
- Return to see your doctor for stitch (*suture*) or staple removal as directed.

GET HELP IF:

- You have watery poop or cannot poop for more than 3 days.
- You feel sick to your stomach (*nauseous*) or throw up (*vomit*) more than 2 to 3 times.
- You or your child has a temperature by mouth above 102° F (38.9° C).
- You develop chills.
- The wound edges break open after your stitches or staples have been removed.
- You see redness or puffiness around your wound.
- There is yellow or green fluid (*drainage*) coming from the wound.
- You notice a bad smell coming from the wound.
- You see a bulge or bump in your lower stomach or near your groin.

Easy-to-Read style based on content from Parkland Health & Hospital System, Dallas, Texas

Document Released: 10/15/2010 Document Re-Released: 03/14/2011

ExitCare® Patient Information ©2011 ExitCare, LLC.