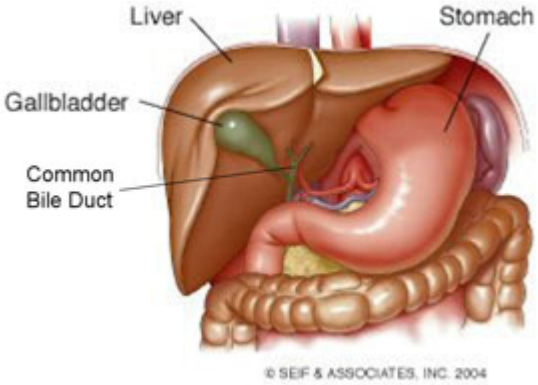
Laparoscopic Removal of Gallbladder
(Cholecystectomy), Care After Surgery

Refer to this sheet in the next few weeks. These discharge instructions provide you with general information on caring for yourself after you leave the hospital. Your caregiver may also give you specific instructions. Your treatment has been planned according to the most current medical practices available, but unavoidable complications sometimes occur. If you have any problems or questions after discharge, please call your caregiver.

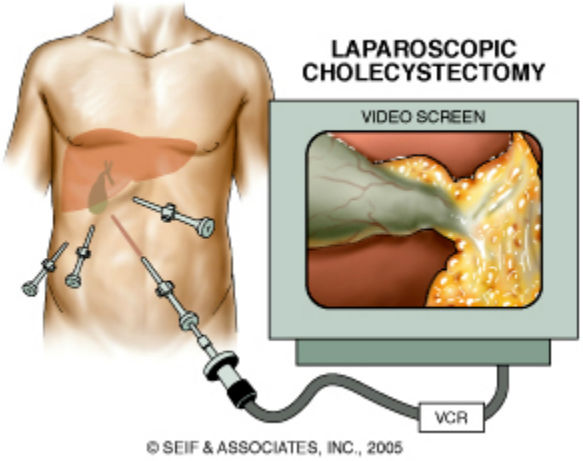


HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- You may put ice on the surgical site.
  - Put ice in a plastic bag.
  - Place a towel between your skin and the bag.
  - Leave the ice on for 10 to 20 minutes, 3 times per day.
- Change bandages (*dressings*) as directed.
- Keep the wound dry and clean. The wound may be washed gently with a soap that kills germs (*antimicrobial*). Gently blot or dab dry. **Do not** rub the wound.
- **Do not** take baths or use swimming pools or hot tubs for 10 days, or as instructed by your caregiver.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- You may continue your normal diet as directed.
- **Do not** lift anything more than 10 pounds or play contact sports for 3 weeks, or as directed.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- There is redness, swelling, or increasing pain in the wound.
- You notice pus coming from the wound.
- There is drainage from a wound lasting longer than 1 day.
- You have an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C).
- There is a bad smell coming from the wound or dressing.
- The cut (*incision*) breaks open.



SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You develop a rash.
- You have difficulty breathing.
- You develop any reaction or side effects to medicines given.
- You have an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C), not controlled by medicine.
- You have increasing pain in the shoulders (shoulder strap areas). Some pain is common and expected because of the gas inserted into your belly (*abdomen*) during the procedure.
- You develop dizzy episodes or fainting while standing.
- You develop severe belly (*abdominal*) pain.
- You develop persistent nausea or vomiting lasting more than 1 day.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

Document Released: 10/14/2008 Document Re-Released: 03/14/2011

ExitCare® Patient Information ©2011 ExitCare, LLC.