

# Laparoscopic Gallbladder

Removal of the gallbladder through a laparoscope that is inserted through an incision in the abdominal wall near the navel.

## **Before the day of surgery:**

- Ask your doctor if you need to stop blood-thinning medicines like aspirin or coumadin.

## **On the day of surgery:**

- You will need to arrive 1 ½-2 hours before surgery. A nurse will interview you, start an IV and answer any questions you have.

## **Diet**

- Clear liquids advancing to a regular diet the day following surgery.

### **After surgery**

- Shoulder discomfort is common for 24-48 hours after surgery due to the carbon dioxide gas used to inflate the abdomen. The gas allows the surgeon a better view of the pelvic organs.
- Gas pains may occur while the digestive process returns to normal.
- Discomfort varies. Your surgeon will prescribe pain medication. Before anesthesia wears off, plan to take a dose of the prescribed pain medication, with food and plenty of fluids to avoid constipation.
- Resume all medication as taken before the surgery unless otherwise instructed by your doctor.

## **Activities and restrictions**

- Follow your doctor's orders concerning driving, returning to work, exercising, climbing stairs and lifting.
- Sexual intercourse is allowed when comfortable.

## **Dressing and wound care**

- There will be several small incisions on the abdomen that may be closed with a dissolving suture and covered with small nylon strips called steri strips. Some physicians use surgical glue.
- Leave the steri strips in place until they begin to curl, usually within 5 to 7 days.
- Observe the incisions daily for signs of infection, redness, swelling, increased tenderness, discharge (pus) or fever.
- Showers may be taken as directed by your surgeon.

## **Reasons to contact your physician**

- Extreme discomfort not controlled by pain medication
- Excessive bleeding from an incision
- Prolonged nausea or vomiting, fever and/or chills

- Leg swelling, calf tenderness
- Shortness of breath, chest pain or unusual sputum
- Signs of wound infection