AFTER LAPAROSCOPIC SURGERY - WHAT TO EXPECT

When you have laparoscopic surgery carbon dioxide is put into your abdomen enabling your Doctor to better view your organs. When your operation has finished some of this gas remains inside your abdomen and because of this you may experience some of the following side effects

* A sensation of swelling or bloating in your abdomen.
* Pain in either one or both of your shoulders, neck or ribs.
* Cramping wind pain that feels like it is moving around your abdomen.

These side effects are all common and should settle within 2-3 days after surgery. Walking and passing wind are ways that can help ease this abdominal discomfort.

Laparoscopic surgery involves a number of small incision (cuts) being made into your abdomen. Due to these small incisions you may experience the following

* Pain or discomfort at incision sites - Your Doctor may give you a prescription for pain relieving medications when you go home that you can buy at any Pharmacy. Other effective types of pain relieving medications include: Paracetamol or Panadeine, Ibuprofen, Voltaren or Naprogesic. These medications are available over the counter (no prescription needed) from either the pharmacy or supermarket.

* Bleeding - Slight bleeding or ooze may be noticed on your wound dressings. This is normal unless bleeding continues or increases. Bleeding or discharge vaginally can also occur and may continue for a few days after surgery. If this happens to you, you are encouraged to use sanitary pads and not tampons.

After surgery you will have between 2-4 wound dressings. These dressings are all waterproof and should be kept on for 7 days after surgery. Bathing, swimming and spa use should all be avoided until wounds have healed - usually 1-2 weeks.

Whilst in hospital you would have been wearing white, knee length compression stockings. These stockings help to circulate blood in your lower legs decreasing your risk of blood clots forming. You should try to wear your stockings when you get home for 10 days.

Gentle walking after your surgery is recommended and may help to - decrease wind pain, lower your chances of developing a blood clot and can also help you to not get constipated after surgery. If you feel you are constipated or have not used your bowels in the following days after surgery over the counter medications from the pharmacy such as Normacol or Movicol are
recommended. Increasing your fluid intake can also be helpful if you become constipated.

Regular physical and sexual activity may be resumed once any bleeding or discomfort has settled but most importantly when you feel you are ready!

If you experience any of the following symptoms you should make an appointment to see your Doctor or if necessary present to your local Emergency department –

* Excessive vaginal bleeding that is heavier than your normal period.
* Painful, swollen and or very red wound.
* Excessive pain or discomfort.
* Fever or increased temperature.
* Pain or burning when passing urine or a need to pass urine frequently.
* Any other concerns you may have.

If you have questions or concerns please do not hesitate to call the Macquarie ward on either 9382 6298 or 9382 6299.