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### **Post-operative instructions for laparoscopic cholecystectomy**

After your laparoscopic cholecystectomy, you will be reviewed by me or one of my team members and discharged. This may occur on the same day as the surgery (this will have been previously discussed) but more commonly it will be the day after. Below are some post-operative notes, please familiarise yourself with them.

#### **Diet:**

Although there are no special restrictions, some people experience loose stools ("the runs") when eating certain foods, especially those high in fat. This is not dangerous but can be annoying. It is often short lived and after 12 months, almost all patients can eat whatever they wish without any issues.

#### **Pain relief:**

Regular Panadol and Nurofen are usually sufficient and should be taken regularly **and** together, at least for the first 1 or 2 days. You will be provided with a script for a stronger analgesic (such as Tramadol or Endone) to supplement the Panadol and Nurofen **if** you need it.

#### **Wound care:**

Your wounds will be dressed with waterproof dressings. Please do not allow water to get under the dressings for 48 hours. After 5 to 7 days, feel free to remove the dressings and leave the wounds uncovered. You may get them wet at this time. There are **no** sutures to remove.

#### **Activities and driving:**

Please move about as much as you can within the limits of your comfort. My only recommendation is to avoid heavy lifting (> 5kg) or straining for 6 weeks after the surgery as this may lead to a hernia forming, usually at the belly button, from the sutures failing from too much strain. You should only drive once you are comfortable performing the normal maneuvers of driving without limitations due to pain/discomfort. Usually this is 2 weeks.

#### **Expected healing process:**

Tenderness, slight swelling and bruising can occur around the port sites (the "cuts"). This is not a cause for concern and will improve in 2 to 4 weeks. Right shoulder tip pain is common and is usually related to irritation of your diaphragm after the surgery. This is short lived. You may experience pain where the gallbladder used to be for 1-2 weeks but this fades away quickly. After about 6 weeks you should be back to normal.

#### **Return to work:**

Expect to take at least 2 weeks off work while you recuperate. You will need to be on light duties until 6 weeks after the operation.

**Things you should tell your GP or me about:**

- Severe pain that is not responding to the pain relief prescribed needs attention and should not be ignored.
- Increasing redness or discharge from the wounds may indicate a wound infection (rare) and may require antibiotics.
- Fevers or feeling sick after this procedure is unusual and you should contact your GP or me for attention immediately.

**Follow up:**

Your usual follow up with me will be around 4 to 6 weeks after the procedure and you will be provided with an appointment card at discharge or will be asked to make an appointment yourself (if you go home on the weekend, for example). It is important for you to keep your appointment as we can discuss your recovery, the histology results, and I can assess your healing and give you the all clear.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Romero', with a small horizontal line underneath.

Dr Mark Romero