What will I experience following my surgery? cont’d

Activity:
- Increase activity as energy level returns to normal
- Take frequent rest periods during the day
- No heavy lifting or strenuous activity as directed by your Physician

Diet:
- Eat light, low fat foods and fluids initially for several days. Eat a low fat diet for several weeks or longer if diarrhea develops. You may eat a normal diet when you no longer have diarrhea.
- Some pain medication may cause constipation. Eat foods with bulk and drink plenty of fluids, i.e. water.

Personal Care:
- Keep the four dressings on your abdomen clean and dry. Remove dressings when directed by your doctor
- You may shower 48 hours after surgery or as directed by your doctor

When should I call the doctor?
- Worsening redness surrounding any of your incisions
- Persistent bleeding
- Persistent nausea or vomiting
- Any drainage or discharge from incision
- Persistent fever (over 38˚ C) and/or chills
- Persistent cough or shortness of breath
- If you develop severe pain in abdomen or behind breast bone and if abdomen becomes enlarged or vomiting occurs

If you have any of these symptoms please make an appointment to have this checked by your surgeon or your family doctor as soon as possible or go to the Emergency Department of the closest hospital.

References:
1. Instructions for Surgery Patients - Economou & Economou
2. Department of General Surgery – RVH

Alternate Sources of Information:
**What is a laparoscopic cholecystectomy?**

This is a surgical technique used to remove your gallbladder.

You will have 4 small incisions that are less than 1 inch long.
- one at the belly button
- one in the upper abdomen
- two just under your ribs on the right side

The surgeon inserts a scope that has a lens and a powerful light into the incision. The scope is attached to a small camera and allows the surgeon to see the inside of your abdomen on a monitor. Your abdomen is inflated with carbon dioxide gas to help the surgeon see better.

**How do I prepare for this procedure?**

- Do not eat after midnight, the night before your surgery
- Shower or bathe the morning of your surgery.
- Take all your prescribed morning medication at 6:00 a.m. with a sip of water unless otherwise instructed.
- If you are on diabetic or blood thinning medications, check with your doctor to find out whether you need to stop them before surgery.
- You must arrange for a responsible adult to accompany you home and stay with you overnight.

**What are the risks involved with a laparoscopic cholecystectomy?**

- Bleeding
- Infection
- 5% or less chance of the abdomen being opened to remove the gallbladder due to complications or a severely diseased gallbladder.
- Remote risk of bile leakage.

**What will happen the day of my surgery?**

You will register with a clerk in Registration on the Second Level of the hospital.

Once you have registered, someone will assist you to the change room where you will put on a hospital gown and housecoat. You will be shown where to wait until a nurse is able to see you. The nurse will review your medical history, take your temperature, blood pressure, pulse, and weight. You will be taken to a waiting room where you will remain until your name is called (bring reading material).

You will walk to the Operating room where you will meet the anesthesiologist. The staff in the operating room will explain each step prior to your surgery.

Following the procedure you will be taken to the Post Anesthetic Care Unit (PACU) and will be constantly observed. When your blood pressure, pulse and breathing are stable you will be taken to the Surgery Recovery area. You will be encouraged to drink fluids and empty your bladder before being discharged home. You will be discharged from the hospital after you have met the designated criteria and you are stable. The nurse will review the instructions you should follow at home.

**What may I experience following my surgery?**

A prescription may be given to you for pain medication to control any discomfort you may have. You may experience pain that goes into the right shoulder area – this is normal and may last up to one week. If you have a prescription to be filled, please read the information printed out by your pharmacist. He/she is a good resource if you have any questions about your prescription or other medications.

Do **not** operate a motor vehicle or perform tasks requiring skill, coordination or judgment for **24 hours** after your surgery or as directed by your physician.