

After a gynaecological procedure

Operation (to be filled in): _____ .

Recovery after surgery

Sick leave is prescribed to ensure you can recover and gather your strength. Being as active as your body allows, adequate sleep and diverse diet will improve your general physical wellness and speed up your recovery from the surgery. Avoid physically strenuous activities, sudden movements, lifting and reaching up until the final week of your medical leave. Then you can gradually get back to your normal daily tasks. You can drive a car when you feel it is comfortable and safe to do so. You can start biking on the last week of your sick leave as well. You must use the supportive stockings you received from the ward daily until your activity level has returned to the level it was before the surgery. The stockings are important because using them lowers the risk of developing blood clots.

Follow-up care

Samples were taken for pathological examination during your surgery. If the samples indicate something requiring follow-up treatment, you will be contacted within 2 weeks. When all the sample analyses are complete, your patient record and sample results become viewable at My Kanta pages (www.kanta.fi/en), if you have given your consent to using this service. If you want that your patient record is sent to you at home, your professional healthcare service or to a private practitioner, let your nurse know.

Pain management

After you are discharged, the operating area can still feel sore. Usually over the counter pain medication is enough to manage the pain. It is best to take them regularly in the beginning, because they also lessen the swelling around the surgical wound.

Postoperative bleeding and hygiene

If hysterectomy or prolapse surgery was performed vaginally, postoperative bleeding from the vagina is normal and lasts for 1 to 4 weeks. Postoperative bleeding after a laparoscopic surgery lasts for a shorter period of time. Vaginal stitches are absorbable.

It is not recommended to engage in intercourse, use tampons or menstrual cups, bath in a bathtub or swim during postoperative bleeding. This is due to the risk of infection and to ensure that the wound in the vagina heals properly. If you had a laparoscopic hysterectomy, the wound

in the vagina requires a longer, 2 months long recovery time. Intercourse is strongly discouraged during this time.

Shower is the best way to clean yourself. Keep wound coverings on for the first few days if you have them. Wound coverings should be removed on the third morning after the operation. After that, you can wash the wound gently using lukewarm water as needed. Dry the area around the wound by patting the area with a clean towel. You can use the sauna one week after the surgery.

Bowel function

Diverse diet and drinking enough fluids are recommended to promote normal bowel function. If necessary, you can use plums, bran and over the counter laxatives, available from pharmacies.

Personalized instructions

Stiches are reabsorbing or the stiches/staples must be removed, removal date (to be filled in):

_____.

Postoperative check-up and possible follow-up treatment is planned on an individual basis.

Problems

Contact the hospital where you operation was performed if you experience any of the following problems during your sick leave:

- increasing pain, or the nature of the pain changes
- heavy bloody or foul-smelling vaginal discharge
- the surgical wound or the area around it becomes sore, red, swollen or hard
- the wound is leaking blood-streaked fluid or puss
- your body temperature reaches over 37,5 degrees repeatedly
- you experience problems with bowel function, diarrhea or vomiting
- you experience problems with urinating (difficulty to pass urine, urge to urinate becomes more frequent, burning sensation when urinating)