

# Discharge Advice



- You should continue to have low fat food for 4-6 weeks after surgery
- A high fibre diet and plenty of fluids help to avoid constipation while you are taking strong pain tablets. Take the pain tablets only as prescribed.
- If your wounds become red, swollen, painful or hot to touch, or have any discharge, contact your local doctor.
- You will be given an appointment to see your surgeon or local doctor in 7-10 days. It is important to keep this appointment even if you have dissolvable stitches.
- You will be tired for a few days and should plan your day to allow an afternoon rest.

## Activity After Discharge



- Around the House:** You may walk about as you wish. You should be able to resume light duties within a few days
- Return to Work:** This depends on the type of work you do, and should be discussed with your doctor but generally you will be off work for 1-2 weeks.
- Driving:** You can resume driving when you are not taking strong medication for pain relief
- Sport:** Resumption of sporting activities is variable, and you should discuss this with your surgeon and/or local doctor.

**Disclaimer:** This patient pathway is intended as a guide only. As each patient is an individual and responds differently, the care plan may alter. If you have questions, please discuss with your Doctor or Nurse

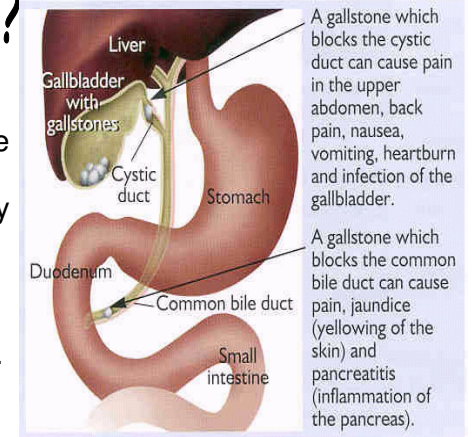
This pathway provides information about your surgery, admission to hospital, and what to expect as you recover. Please read this and bring it with you on the day of your operation.

Ask the staff if you have any questions or concerns.

## What is a Cholecystectomy?

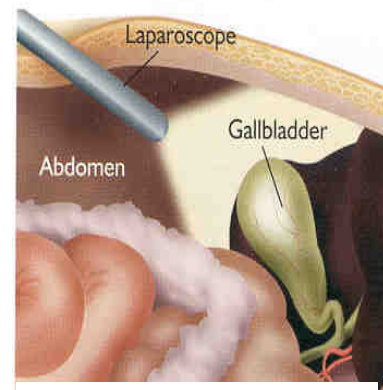
A Cholecystectomy is the removal of your gall bladder, which is a small sac located under your liver on the right side of your upper abdomen. The gall bladder stores bile which is produced by the liver and helps digestion of food by breaking down fats.

The gall bladder may become inflamed or infected due to blockage with stones. This inflammation is known as cholecystitis.



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## How is it performed?



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The operation is performed under general anaesthetic, by keyhole surgery using a laparoscope which is an optical instrument with a light at its tip. The gall bladder is viewed through the laparoscope and removed with instruments inserted through three more small incisions in your abdomen.

Occasionally the laparoscopic procedure is not possible and the operation is performed through a longer incision below the ribs.

More information about the risks, benefits and limitations of Gall bladder surgery can be obtained from the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons' pamphlet 'Laparoscopic Gall bladder Surgery'; available from your surgeon.

## Expected Length of Stay

- You will be expected to stay in hospital two nights. Discharge time is 10 am.
- Before you come into hospital please make arrangements for someone to drive you home on discharge.

## What to bring to hospital

- All medicines (including tablets, drops and inhalers) you are taking because these will be continued whilst you are in hospital.
- Glasses, and/or hearing aids if you use them.
- Toiletries and night clothes.
- Do **not** bring a large amount of money, jewellery or valuables.



## Pre-Admission Clinic

- You will be assessed by a doctor and the Pre-Admission nurse.
- You will be instructed to have nothing to eat or drink for 6 hours before your surgery.
- You will have blood tests taken and if you are over 50 years of age, an Electrocardiograph (ECG) to make sure you are fit for surgery.
- Your blood pressure, weight and urine test will be recorded.
- The Dietitian will be notified of your admission date.

## Day of Surgery

- You will be admitted to the Day Procedure Unit and transferred to a ward after your operation.
- Your pulse, blood pressure, breathing rate, oxygen levels and temperature will be measured regularly after your surgery.
- You may need to wear an oxygen mask for a short time after your operation.



## Pain Relief

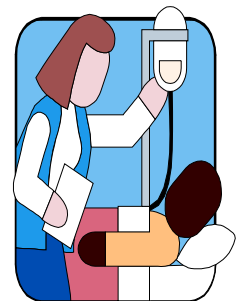
- You will be given intravenous pethidine or morphine initially after your surgery.
- This will be ceased the next day and you will be given tablets for pain, which you may continue at home for a few days.
- You may experience some pain in the tip of your shoulders due to air under your diaphragm. This is normal after this procedure.
- It is important that you tell the nurses if you have pain.

## Wound Care

- You may have a drain tube to remove blood and bile from the gall bladder site, which will be removed when the drainage is minimal.
- The dressing over your navel wound will be removed and left open the day after your surgery. Waterproof dressings should not be used because the navel area is often moist and sticky.
- The other wounds should be kept clean and dry for 2 days. The dressings will be changed before you leave hospital and re-applied. You may remove these the next day or replace with a clean dressing for 2-3 days and then leave open.
- Any stitches will be removed by the surgeon or your local doctor in 7- 10 days. An appointment will be made for you by the nursing staff.

## Food & Fluids

- You will have an intravenous line (drip) in your arm until you are drinking normally.
- You will be able to have ice chips 4 hours after your operation and sips of fluid if you desire.
- Normal fluid intake and a low fat diet is usually commenced on the day after your operation and the dietitian will discuss this with you.



## Activity Whilst in Hospital

- The nursing staff will help you out of bed later in the day of your surgery and you may go to the toilet. Next day you will be able to walk short distances, which you may slowly increase as you feel fit.