Post-Operative Instructions:  
Laparoscopic Hysterectomy

What special care will I need after my surgery?

Rest:
• During the first 24 hours, you should not drive or operate complicated machines.
• You will need extra rest; you may feel fatigued, and therefore should make sure not to do any strenuous activity.

Pain Medications:
• Ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin) 600mg every 6 hours as needed. This dosage is the same as taking 3 over-the-counter (200mg) Ibuprofen tablets.
• Your doctor may give you a prescription for a stronger narcotic medication, such as Vicodin/Norco or Darvocet. Most likely, you will need these stronger medications only for a few days at home, and the Ibuprofen should suffice Thereafter.
• You may also take Acetaminophen (Tylenol); but do not combine Tylenol with Darvocet or Vicodin/Norco, because these medications already contain Acetaminophen. You may alternate the Ibuprofen with the narcotic pain medication.

During the next few days you may experience the following:

Vaginal Bleeding and Cramps:
• This is due to the instrument placed in the opening of your cervix during the procedure. The bleeding may last several days.

Pain:
• It is common to have mild to moderate shoulder, throat, and neck pain, as well as abdominal bloating for 1-2 weeks after surgery. This is caused by the gas placed into your abdomen during the surgery. This will go away in time.
• You will also have some pain around the area of the incisions. Take pain medications as needed.
• Abdominal bruises and tenderness are common.

When can I start doing normal activities?

Exercise:
• You need to avoid heavy lifting (more than 20 pounds) or strenuous activity or exercise for approximately 2 weeks, until you are cleared by the physician at your post-operative visit.
• You may gradually increase daily activity, including walking, as you start to feel better.
Driving:
• You need to avoid driving a motor vehicle for the first 24 hours after surgery. The discomfort of your surgery as well as pain medications you may be taking can cause fatigue and increase your risks while driving. If you are taking Vicodin/Norco or Darvocet, you should avoid driving or operating heavy machinery until you no longer need narcotic pain medications.

Sex:
• If you had a Laparoscopic Supracervical Hysterectomy (LSH), you should abstain from intercourse for approximately 2 weeks or until you have been cleared by your physician at your post-operative visit.
• If you had a Total Laparoscopic Hysterectomy (TLH) with removal of your uterus and cervix, you should abstain from intercourse for approximately 10 weeks or until you have been cleared by your physician at your post-operative visit.

Bathing:
• You may shower the day after your surgery.
• Avoid tub baths, swimming, and hot tubs for approximately 2 weeks or until you have been cleared by your physician at your post-operative visit.

Other:
• No douching or tampons for 6-8 weeks.

How can I take care of my incisions?
You should keep your incisions clean and dry. If you have Band-Aids, they should be removed the day after surgery. You may use mild soap and water in the shower to gently clean the wound daily. Pat dry and keep the wound as dry as possible. A dressing is usually not needed, but if you have excessive moisture in the area, you may place a piece of gauze dressing (available over the counter) in the area to absorb excess moisture. Tub baths or swimming are not recommended for at least 2 weeks. Some drainage from the wound is common, but if you have severe pain, redness, swelling or foul-smelling discharge, call the office.

When should I return for checkup?
• 1-2 weeks; you will be given instructions when you are discharged.
• Call the office if you have any fever, chills, purulent discharge from the wound, or excessive pain or redness around the incision(s).

Under what other circumstances should I call the office?
• You have a fever over 100.4°F
• You have unusual abdominal pain or bloating that gets worse.
• You have chest pain or shortness of breath.
• You have nausea and vomiting.
• You have increased pain, swelling, redness, or discharge from your incision(s)
• You are bleeding through more than 1 pad per hour.
• The discharge from your vagina has a foul odor.
• You are unable to empty your bladder, or you feel a burning pain when you urinate.
• Your legs are tender or red