

## VAGINAL SURGERY HANDOUT

**Important things to do immediately after your operation:**

**Foot and Leg Movements - for your circulation:**

- Move your ankle and foot up, down and around in circles frequently
- Push straightened knees down into the bed (10x every hour)
- Squeeze buttocks together (10x every hour)
- Do Not cross your legs

**Deep Breathing:**

- Take 5-6 slow deep breaths every half hour
- Keep your shoulders low
- Feel the air going down to your lower ribs, which should move out as you breathe in
- Hold some of the breaths for a few seconds

**Huffing and Coughing - to keep your chest clear:**

- While you huff and when you cough, tighten your pelvic floor muscles
- Sit up straight and bend your knees up one at a time
- Breathe in, hold it and then huff. (Your Physiotherapist can show you how)
- Take another deep breath and have one strong cough. Do this hourly whilst awake

**Getting in and Out of Bed - especially important if you have had abdominal surgery:**

- Lying flat on your back, bend one knee at a time
- Draw in your belly button and roll in one piece (like a log) to the side
- Push your underneath elbow and your hands down into the bed, at the same time lower your legs over the side of the bed and come up into a sitting position
- Get back into bed the same way

## VAGINAL SURGERY HANDOUT

### Back Care:

- You will need to rest in a semi-upright position for your chest/lungs. It is important whilst in this position to have your low back well supported
- Try to vary your position by lying flat or on your side
- Sit up in the chair with a pillow to support the curve in your lower back
- Try a hot pack if you have a backache

### Pelvic Floor Tightening:

After your operation you must squeeze and lift these muscles every time you cough. Your Physiotherapist can explain this further and provide you with a handout.

### Planning To Go Home:

To ensure adequate healing and the best outcome of your surgery it is very important that you take care of yourself. Try to avoid standing for long periods or lifting anything heavier than 1-2kg for the next 6-12 weeks.

This means quite a change in lifestyle!

**It is recommended that for the next 6 weeks;**

### **DO NOT:**

- Iron or vacuum
- Play sport or go swimming
- Have sexual intercourse - until the doctor has examined you at your clinic visit after the operation

You will also need to avoid lifting heavy objects such as saucepans, wet washing, young children, grocery bags, furniture etc. Also avoid digging in your garden, chopping wood, caring for disabled adults or looking after large animals during this time.

**Start planning for help with your domestic chores NOW**

## VAGINAL SURGERY HANDOUT

### YOU CAN:

- Prepare meals
- Dust
- Pull up the bed clothing
- Other light housework

You can increase your fitness by walking. Initially, in the first week you may find that walking/standing for 5-10 minutes (at a time) will be enough. You can then gradually increase the time you walk to 30-40 minutes (at a time) by week 6.

If you have had **vaginal surgery** you should avoid any activity, which causes a sense of pressure in the vagina (e.g. lifting). If you do experience a sense of pressure in the vagina you should try leaning forwards over a table or kitchen bench and try tightening your pelvic floor muscles a few times (see your doctor if it persists)

You shouldn't drive a car until you know you have no pain and would be able to brake suddenly if required. A small car that is an automatic and has power steering will be easier than driving a large manual car with no power steering.

\*\*\* It is important to check with your insurance company for when you will be covered to drive after your surgery \*\*\*

**Contact:** Physiotherapy Department      **Tel:** (03) 5143 8560