_____'s Care Guide after Gallbladder, Appendix or Hernia Surgery

I came to the hospital on _____ **and left on** _____

I came to the hospital because _____

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☺☹☺ How I may feel and what I should do

These symptoms are **normal**	My notes and questions

These symptoms are **normal**

I may feel pain
- I may have shoulder pain for up to 1 week after surgery.
- I should take my pain medication before my pain gets really bad.
- I should follow the instructions on my medication bottle.
- I should use less narcotic pain medication as my pain gets better. Examples are Percocet, Oxycodone, Tylenol 3, Morphine, or Hydromorphone.
- **I can't** drive or drink alcohol while taking narcotic pain medication.
- I should talk to my pharmacist about using Tylenol Extra Strength.
- I should hold a pillow tightly against my incision when I cough or sneeze to help with the pain.
- I can use an icepack if I had groin (inguinal) hernia surgery.

I may feel constipated
- Pain medication can make it hard for me to have a bowel movement.
- I should drink lots of water, and eat lots of fruits and vegetables.
- **I shouldn't** strain or push too hard when having a bowel movement.
- I can take a stool softener like Senekot if I haven't had a bowel movement in 2 days. I should ask my pharmacist for help.

I may feel tired
- Pain medication can make me feel sleepy. I should rest when I'm tired.

I may not feel hungry
- I should eat smaller meals and snacks more often.

My notes and questions

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These symptoms are **not normal**

- I have pain that doesn't get better when I take pain medication.
- I have ongoing nausea and vomiting.
- I have pain, redness, or swelling in my lower leg.
- My incision is painful and looks more red or swollen, or is draining pus.
- My temperature is over 38.5°C or I have chills.
- I have signs jaundice (such as yellow skin or eyes) and I had gallbladder surgery.

I need to call my surgeon or go to the nearest **emergency department** if I can't reach my surgeon.

⚠ These symptoms are **an emergency** ⚠

- I have trouble breathing.
- I have new and really bad chest pain.

I need to call 911.

MICHAEL GARRON HOSPITAL
TORONTO EAST HEALTH NETWORK

How I should care for my incision

If I have steri-strips (small strips of tape on my incision)
- The steri-strips should fall off on their own in 7-10 days.
- If they haven't fallen off on their own, I can gently take them off in the shower after 10 days.

If I have staples
- My family doctor or surgeon will take out my staples after 10-14 days.

If I have a little bleeding
- I should clean my incision with warm water in the shower, dry it with a clean towel, and cover it with a Band-Aid.

How my activities will change

Showering
- I can shower 24 hours after my surgery.
- I can let soapy water run over my incision, but **I shouldn't** rub my incision.
- **I can't** have a bath, go swimming, or use a hot tub until 2 weeks after my surgery.

Exercise and physical activity
- I should practice deep breathing to keep my lungs healthy.
- I should be active to help me gain strength and feel better.
- I should go for walks often, but I should take a break when I need one.
- **I can't** lift more than 30-40 pounds for 4 weeks after my surgery.

My notes and questions

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My medications

- ☐ I was given a list of medications I need to take.
- ☐ I was told why I need to take my medications.
- ☐ I was told about the side effects of my medications.

My appointments

- ☐ I was given a list of my appointments.
- ☐ Someone reviewed my list with me.
- ☐ I was told about the automated phone call.

Where I can go for more information

For information about…	I can call or go to…