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PATIENT INFORMATION FROM YOUR SURGEON & SAGES

Laparoscopic Spleen Removal (Splenectomy)

- Less postoperative pain
 - Shorter hospital stay
 - Faster return to a regular, solid food diet
 - Quicker return to normal activities
 - Better cosmetic results
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- After your surgeon reviews with you the potential risks and benefits of the operation, you will need to provide written consent for surgery.
 - Preoperative preparation includes blood work, medical evaluation, chest x-ray and an EKG depending on your age and medical condition.
 - Immunization with a vaccine to help prevent bacterial infections after the spleen is removed should be given two weeks before surgery, if possible.
 - Blood transfusion and/or blood products such as platelets may be needed depending on your condition.
 - Your surgeon may request that you completely empty your colon and cleanse your intestines prior to surgery. You may be requested to drink clear liquids, only, for one or several days prior to surgery.
 - It is recommended that you shower the night before or morning of the operation.
 - After midnight the night before the operation, you should not eat or drink anything except medications that

your surgeon has told you are permissible to take with a sip of water the morning of surgery.

- Drugs such as aspirin, blood thinners, anti-inflammatory medications (arthritis medications) and Vitamin E will need to be stopped temporarily for several days to a week prior to surgery.
- Diet medication or St. John s Wort should not be used for the two weeks prior to surgery.
- Quit smoking and arrange for any help you may need at home.

- Activity: You can walk and go up stairs. You can shower, but most surgeons prefer that you do not soak in a tub for at least a week or more after surgery. When you feel stronger ask your surgeon about more strenuous activities.
- Driving: Ask your surgeon. Most people can resume driving 5 to 7 days after surgery. You should not be taking pain medication when you drive.
- Diet: Unless you have special dietary needs, such as diabetes, you can eat a normal diet at home.
- Bowel function: It is common to get constipated after surgery, especially when you are taking pain medication. It is important to drink plenty of water and take in enough fiber in your diet. Your surgeon may advise you about means to help your bowel function postoperatively. Ask or call your surgeon before taking a cathartic.

- Persistent fever over 101 degrees F (39 C)
- Bleeding
- Increasing abdominal swelling
- Pain that is not relieved by your medications
- Persistent nausea or vomiting
- Chills
- Persistent cough or shortness of breath
- Purulent drainage (pus) from any incision
- Redness surrounding any of your incisions that is worsening or getting bigger
- You are unable to eat or drink liquids

This brochure is intended to provide a general overview of a laparoscopic splenectomy. It is not intended to serve as a substitute for professional medical care or a discussion between you and your surgeon about the need for a laparoscopic spleen removal. Specific recommendations may vary among health care professionals. If you have a question about your need for a laparoscopic splenectomy, your alternatives, billing or insurance coverage, or your surgeons training and experience, do not hesitate to ask your surgeon or his/her office staff about it. If you have questions about the operation or subsequent follow up, discuss them with your surgeon before or after the operation.

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS:

[Doctors may purchase bulk reprints of SAGES Patient Information Brochures from the SAGES Store.](#)

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Requests for single reprints should be sent to:

SOCIETY OF AMERICAN GASTROINTESTINAL ENDOSCOPIC SURGEONS (SAGES)
11300 West Olympic Blvd., Suite 600
Los Angeles, CA 90064
Tel: (310) 437-0544
Fax: (310) 437-0585
E-Mail: SAGESweb@sages.org

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