

Gallbladder Removal

Laparoscopic cholecystectomy (keyhole) · Take this sheet home and keep it handy during recovery.



7 days

DRESSINGS DRY



~7 days

DRIVING



4 wks

NO LIFTING >5 KG/HAND



1–2 wks

BACK TO WORK

Wound & dressing care

- Keep the small keyhole dressings clean, intact and dry for **7 days**.
- Shower after 7 days; pat the wounds dry. Stitches are dissolvable — no removal needed.
- No baths, swimming or spa pools for 2 weeks. A little bruising or yellow antiseptic staining is normal.

Pain & comfort

- Mild to moderate tummy pain is common. **Shoulder-tip pain** from the gas used during surgery is normal for 24–72 hours and is not a sign anything is wrong.
- Take your prescribed pain relief; gentle walking helps clear the gas.
- Some nausea in the first 24 hours is common — anti-nausea medicine will be sent home if needed.

Activity, work & driving

- Gentle walking from day one; avoid strenuous exercise for **2 weeks**.
- Avoid lifting more than **5 kg per hand for 4 weeks**.
- Desk work after about 7–10 days.
- Drive again once you can perform an emergency stop without flinching — usually 3–5 days.


Diet & digestion


- Start with light foods for a day or two, then return to your normal diet.
- Fatty or spicy foods may cause looser stools or cramping at first — this usually settles.
- You don't need to avoid fat permanently; eat smaller, regular meals while your digestion adjusts.


Seek help urgently if...

- ! Fever, or yellowing of the skin or eyes (jaundice)
- ! Persistent vomiting or inability to keep fluids down
- ! Increasing or severe abdominal pain
- ! Spreading redness or wound discharge
- ! Shoulder-tip pain that gets worse after day 3
- ! Calf pain or swelling, or shortness of breath

Questions during your recovery?

 (07) 3333 5518

 admin@upperedgesurgery.com.au

 Watkins Medical Centre, L7 Suite 351, Spring Hill

After hours or an emergency — call 000 or go to your nearest Emergency Department.

Dr Goutham Sivasuthan, FRACS · Upper Edge Surgery · Brisbane · Logan · Redlands · Moreton Bay.

Last reviewed June 2026. This is general guidance only — the specific advice your surgeon gives you about your operation always takes priority.

Most people recover steadily over a few weeks. These general tips help you heal well and avoid common problems after abdominal or keyhole surgery. Use them alongside the specific instructions on the front of this sheet.



Preventing blood clots

- Move your ankles and legs often — ankle circles, foot pumps and knee bends several times a day.
- Get up and walk a little, regularly, rather than sitting for long stretches.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Take any blood-thinning medication exactly as prescribed.



Breathing & chest care

- Take 5–10 slow, deep breaths several times a day, then a gentle cough to clear your chest.
- Support your tummy with a pillow or your hand when you cough or sneeze.
- Sitting upright and walking help your lungs recover.



Getting out of bed safely

- 1 Roll onto your side with your knees bent.
- 2 Let your lower legs move off the edge of the bed.
- 3 Push up sideways with your arms — not your tummy — to sit up.
- 4 Pause for a moment, then stand up slowly.



Caring for your wound & scar

- Keep dressings dry as directed on the front; once healed, keep the area clean.
- No baths, swimming or spa pools for about 2 weeks; keyhole stitches are usually dissolvable.
- Scars settle well over months. Once fully healed, silicone gel or gentle massage helps; protect new scars from the sun.



Medicines & comfort

- Take pain relief regularly at first, then cut back as you improve.
- Don't exceed the stated paracetamol dose; take anti-inflammatories with food if they suit you.
- Strong painkillers can cause constipation — start a gentle laxative (such as Movicol) early and stay hydrated.
- Avoid alcohol while taking strong painkillers.



Eating well for healing

- Eat regular, balanced meals with protein to support healing.
- Plenty of fibre and fluids keep your bowels regular and help you avoid straining.
- If you smoke, stopping — even for now — speeds wound healing.



Looking after yourself matters. Rest when you need to, increase activity a little each day, and don't hesitate to call us on (07) 3333 5518 if something doesn't feel right.