

After Your Endometrial Ablation

Self-care and follow-up

You recently had a procedure called an endometrial ablation. This handout explains what to expect during your recovery period. Please read these instructions now and refer to them at home after your procedure. We hope your recovery is quick and easy.

Personal Care

During surgery, your cervix was dilated so that instruments could be used inside your uterus. To lower your risk of infection in this area:

- Do **not** put anything into your vagina for 2 weeks after surgery. This means you cannot use tampons, douche, or have sexual intercourse.
- Do **not** take a bath, soak in a hot tub, or go swimming for 2 weeks. Bacteria from the water can enter your uterus.

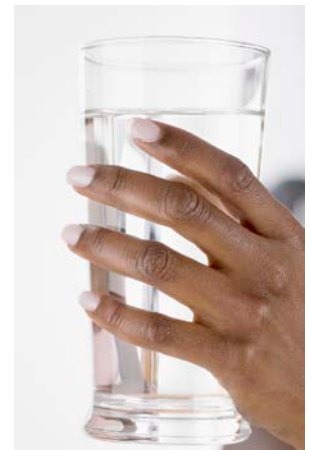
Bleeding and Vaginal Discharge

Ablation destroys the uterine lining (*endometrium*), and this decreases your menstrual flow. You may have some bleeding afterward. This bleeding can be like a light or heavy watery period or a watery bloody discharge that lasts up to a month. Sometimes, the bleeding can stop completely and then start again. It should not be heavier than your usual menstrual period.

Also, because your uterus was affected by the procedure, your usual menstrual cycle may change. Your period may start a few days to several months earlier or later than expected. And, your period may be more painful for a couple of cycles after surgery.

Diet

- Eat foods you feel you can handle after your procedure. You may have some nausea from the anesthesia or pain medicine, which may decrease your appetite.
- It is very important to drink lots of fluids to help you stay hydrated. Clear liquids are usually easiest to handle after surgery.



Eat as usual after your surgery, as you feel able. Be sure to drink plenty of clear liquids.

Activity

- Do **not** drive if you are taking *opioids*, a type of prescription pain medicine.
- Avoid strenuous activity or sports for about 1 week after surgery. You may resume your other daily activities as you feel able.
- You may get tired more easily after your surgery and anesthesia, and from the medicines you are taking. Each person recovers after surgery at a different rate.

Pain

After an endometrial ablation, most women have strong cramping. This usually occurs the day of surgery, and it may last for several days.

- You will be given pain medicine to take at home. Take this medicine as directed. Pain control works best if you take the medicine as soon as you begin to have discomfort. Do not wait until the pain is severe.
- For most patients, *non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs* (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) work best to control their pain. If your doctor tells you to take ibuprofen for pain, take 600 mg every 6 hours with food for the first 24 to 72 hours after your surgery.
- Rarely, a patient has severe pain and needs a prescription pain medicine such as Percocet in addition to the ibuprofen. **Follow the specific instructions your doctor gives you for pain medicines.**

Follow-up Visit

Most women have a follow-up visit about 4 weeks after their surgery. At this visit, your doctor will review the findings from your endometrial ablation and talk with you about your treatment plan, as needed.

If this visit has not yet been scheduled, call the clinic as soon as you can.

When to Call

Please call your doctor if you have any of these symptoms:

- Fever higher than 100.4°F (38°C)
- Nausea and vomiting – cannot handle eating or drinking anything
- Heavy vaginal bleeding (needing to change a pad more than once an hour) or vaginal discharge that has an odd smell
- Pain that keeps getting worse

If you have any of these symptoms:

- **During clinic hours:** Call the UW Roosevelt Women's Health Care Center at 206-598-5500 (press 4 when the greeting starts).
- **After hours and on holidays and weekends:** Call 206-598-6190 and ask for the OB/GYN doctor on call to be paged.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns.

Women's Health Care Center: 206-598-5500 (press 4 when the greeting starts)