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Post-cholecystectomy (gallbladder removal) instructions

After gallbladder surgery

1. Food

- There are **no long-term diet restrictions**.
- Immediately after surgery, start with **bland foods and small portions** to reduce nausea/vomiting.
- Try to eat something before taking prescription pain medicine because it can upset your stomach.
- Use pain medicine only as needed and switch to **Advil (ibuprofen) or Tylenol (acetaminophen)** as soon as appropriate.
- **No alcohol on the day of surgery or while taking pain medication.**

2. Follow-up

- Schedule a follow-up appointment for about **2-3 weeks after surgery**.
- Office: **703-823-4066**.

3. Incision/wound care

- Remove the **outer dressing the morning after surgery**.
- Leave the **Steri-Strips** (small white strips over the incision) in place. They should come off on their own.
- Unless your surgeon says otherwise, you can **shower the day after surgery**.

4. Driving

- You can drive when you're moving around normally and are **no longer taking pain medication**.

5. Activity

- You can use stairs and begin light/aerobic activity **as tolerated**.
- Avoid lifting more than **25 pounds** and avoid **sit-ups for 3 weeks**.

6. Call the surgeon if you develop:

- Persistent nausea or vomiting
- Fever **over 101.5°F**
- Yellowing of the skin or eyes (**jaundice**)
- Leg swelling
- Persistent/worsening abdominal pain

7. Call 703-823-4066, even after hours. If you cannot reach anyone, go to the nearest emergency room or call 911.

If you want, I can also combine **both pages into one simple "Gallbladder Surgery — What to Do Before & After" checklist** that you can save on your phone.