

CONCERNS REGARDING HYSTERECTOMY

Dan C. Martin, M.D.

UT Medical Group, Inc.

7945 Wolf River Boulevard, Suite 320

Germantown, TN 38138

Phone: 901-347-8331

Fax: 901-347-8188

Ovaries

- Saving healthy appearing ovaries is good for:
 - Hormone management
 - Longer life expectancy
- Removing the ovaries is good for
 - Decreasing ovarian cysts and cancer
 - Decreasing future surgery
- There is a 5% chance of reoperation for cysts when the ovaries are saved.
- Reoperation for endometriosis may be high as 47% for if the ovaries are preserved.
- Removal is generally recommended if two family members have ovarian cancer.
- If the ovaries are normal, the chance of cancer later appears to be around 0.25%
- 22% of English physicians and 81% of American physicians routinely remove ovaries by age 49. Current data suggests that healthy ovaries should be saved.

Cervix

- 90% do well with or without the cervix.
- Removing the cervix may help 0.4 to 50% by:
 - Decreased future surgery (1% to 50%)
 - Decreased cervical cancer (0.4%)
 - Decreased technical difficulty
 - Decreased ongoing bleeding (20%)
- Saving the cervix helps 90% of women by:
 - Decreasing pain in the first 1 to 4 weeks
 - Decreasing immediate recovery time
- Saving the cervix may help 1 to 7% by:
 - Improved sexual response
 - Improved vaginal lubrication
 - Improved bladder function
 - Decreased long-term pain
- Removing the cervix for endometriosis can decrease future surgery for endometriosis.
- Complications increase if the cervix needs to be removed at a second operation.

Surgical Expectations and Complications

- 1 to 5 days in hospital
- 3 to 8 weeks for basic recovery and
- 2 to 6 months for complete return of energy
- Pain, fever, nausea, and tiredness are common.
- Readmission to the hospital, additional surgery, infection, blood transfusion and decreased sexuality are uncommon.
- Paralysis, colostomy and death are rare.

Emotions and Mood

- Influenced by hormones
- Influenced by stress
- Are most commonly secondary problems but can be the cause of the most distress

Hormonal changes

- The plan after surgery is to try to produce a general feeling of being balanced
- Decreased ovarian testosterone
- Decreased ovarian estrogen
- Hot flashes and dry vagina if estrogen is decreased
- Bladder instability if estrogen is decreased
- Bone loss and osteoporosis if estrogen is decreased
- Breast tenderness and swelling (water retention) if estrogen is increased
- Energy, concentration, and sexuality may require testosterone
- DHEA and progesterone may be needed
- Exercise, calcium, vitamin D are important.
- Estrogen can cause water retention, breast tenderness, and high blood pressure.
- Testosterone can increase weight and lipids.
- Hormonal changes can influence weight.

Energy loss and stress

- Postoperative pain and healing interfere with sleep; sleep is required to rebuild energy.
- Postsurgical healing requires energy.
- Dealing with hormonal and emotional changes requires energy.
- Dealing with stress requires energy.
- Work and other daily stresses are increased after surgery.
- Body image changes are related to loss of uterus, surgical scars and weight changes; all of these increase stress.
- Energy loss and stress usually last for a few weeks or a few months. In some women, these may last for several months or years. We can usually find a hormonal or other solution that helps if we keep working on the problem.

Constipation

- Constipation after surgery may be due to narcotic pain medication.
- Use stool softeners and laxatives as needed