

# CO<sub>2</sub> Laser Therapy

## What is LASER Therapy?

LASER (light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation) is a form of therapy to remove abnormal tissue from the vulva or vagina. A laser is an intense beam of light that destroys abnormal tissue of the site where the beam is directed.

## Are There Any Side Effects?

- The laser destroys superficial nerve endings. Discomfort begins when the nerve endings start to heal.
- 3 to 4 days after surgery: may have swelling of the treated area, a throbbing sensation (usually brought on by too much physical activity), and/or a watery or pinkish discharge from the treated area
- 5 to 7 days after surgery: the area may develop a whitish-yellowish scab.
- Between 4 and 10 days after surgery your pain may increase.
- Infection is a rare side effect of laser treatment.

## When Should I Call the Doctor?

Please call us **immediately** if you have:

- fever of 100.4°F (38°C), chills
- pain that is not controlled with your prescribed medication
- heavy bleeding from the treated area that does not stop after you have applied firm, continuous pressure for five minutes
- any difficulty urinating

Monday to Friday, 8:00am-5:00pm: **716-845-5855**

After hours, weekends, and holidays, please contact the Roswell Park Call Center at **716-845-2300** and they will assist you.

## What Should I Do When I Get Home?

- You may eat when you return home. Start with clear liquids, such as tea, juice or soup. You may increase your food intake to include more solid foods and dairy products when you feel up to it.
- Starting the day of surgery, sit in a tub of warm water (sitz bath) at least 3 times a day. Add ½ cup of Epsom salts to each bath. Epsom salts is a salt solution that aids in tissue healing. **DO NOT use regular table salt.** You may place ordinary tea bags in the bath water. Tea contains a chemical, tannic acid, which is soothing tissue after laser treatment.
- After you bathe or shower, pat dry – DO NOT rub. You can dry the area with a blow dryer on a low or warm setting.
- Rest for at least 8 hours after surgery.
- DO NOT drive for 24 hours.
- DO NOT use tampons, douche, or have intercourse after treatment until you have been examined at your post-operative visit. These may cause bleeding and delay your healing.
- If you have pain, take the pain medication that was given to you the day of surgery. Don't try to "tough it out".
- You may be given Silvadene cream to apply to the vulva. NOTE: it is important to apply the cream to all surfaces of the labia, especially the inside of the surfaces of the labia minora, perhaps part way into the vagina.
- If the vulva is swollen, you may apply ice packs for 10 to 15 minutes, 2 to 3 times a day.
- Wear only 100% cotton underpants and loose clothing – skirts, bathrobes or loose fitting warm up suits are ideal for 48 hours after surgery.
- You will usually be seen for a check-up in the office within 2 to 3 weeks after treatment.