

After Surgery Care Reference



WALK!

Walking is one of the best things you can do to promote health and healing.

- Get up and move at least every hour
- Avoid sitting/standing for long periods of time
- Start by walking short distances
- Increase your amount of walking as tolerate

General Restrictions

IF IT HURTS, DON'T DO IT!

- Lifting restriction of 5-10 lbs.
- Minimal twisting and bending at surgical site
- Prolonged sitting may be uncomfortable, especially if you had **Lumbar** spine (low back) surgery
- Avoid moving past a comfortable range of motion until directed to do so by your provider
- If you had **Cervical** spine (neck) surgery, no overhead work



Prescription Medications

You may be sent home with prescriptions for pain medication and/or muscle relaxants:

- Our providers prescribe for a LIMITED time after surgery
- Your prescriptions will be tapered down and off
- Please give us **72 BUSINESS HOURS** for refill processing



Shower Daily

Keep your incision clean!



- **NO** baths, swimming pools, hot tubs or bodies of water
- **Do NOT** scrub your incision
- **Do NOT** apply lotions, powders, creams or ointments to your incision

Check your incision site daily

- Keep your incision dry for three days, unless otherwise instructed. Once dressing is removed, you can shower normally
- You may notice a small amount of clear or yellowish drainage from your incision
- You do not need to keep your incision covered unless there is drainage or if otherwise instructed

Eat a healthy diet

Eat regular meals and snacks daily.

- Focus on eating lean proteins and lots of fiber (vegetables, fruit, nuts and grains)
- Stay hydrated. Aim for 64 oz fluid daily, water is best



CALL THE CLINIC

- Fever over 101°
- Incision changes:
 - Increased redness
 - Increased swelling
 - Increased drainage
 - Increased pain

Call 911

- Chest pain
- Difficulty breathing
- Stroke like symptoms:
 - Facial droop
 - Arm/leg weakness or numbness - other than what you were experiencing prior to surgery
 - Slurred speech or difficulty swallowing



Wear your brace, if ordered

- When you are up moving
- When you are in a car
- You may be instructed to wear it all times.

It is ordered to help support your spine and your muscles during recovery, and to remind you to not excessively bend or twist your neck or back.



Use your incentive spirometer

Continue to use the incentive spirometer 10 times every hour while awake for at least 2 weeks

- A good tip is to complete during the commercials while watching TV

DON'T Drive



- While taking narcotics or medications that make you drowsy
- If you can't check your blind spots
- If you have leg or arm weakness or numbness

Avoid constipation

This is one of the most common side effects of narcotic medications

- Increase fiber
- Increase fluid
- Walk



If you do get constipated, try one of these:

- Metamucil (fiber supplement)
- Docusate (stool softener)
- Senna (laxative)
- Miralax (laxative)
- Milk of Magnesia (laxative)
- Dulcolax, pills or suppository (laxative)

If you are still constipated after trying the above medications, try one of these:

- Fleets enema rectally, up to once a day
- Magnesium Citrate, one time only

STOP smoking!

Nicotine delays your healing!

GET HELP:

- Providence Lung Health Program 425-4040-QUIT
- Washington State Tobacco Quit Line 1-800-QUIT-NOW

