



Information for You from Your Health Care Team

Going Home after Minimally Invasive Heart Surgery
(Small anterior thoracotomy or robotic surgery)

Activities:

- SHOWER every day. Gently wash incisions with mild soap and warm water.
- NO tub baths until incisions are fully healed.
- AVOID heavy activities and NO lifting anything over five pounds for ONE WEEK until your pain eases up. THEN progress slowly and gradually to your previous level of activity.
- DRIVING is allowed as soon as you are OFF narcotic pain drugs and you are able to move well without pain.
- WALK as much as you are comfortable and able, several times daily. Slowly increase your activity as you feel better and follow the physical therapist's advice.
- WEAR elastic stockings during the day and take them off at night only until you are able to be active and your feet don't swell.
- PUT YOUR FEET UP when you are sitting for a while.
- WEIGH yourself every day—call your surgeon or cardiologist if you gain more than two pounds a day two days in a row—your body may be holding on to fluid.
- COUNT your pulse every day—call your surgeon or cardiologist if it is less than 60, over 120, or very irregular

Please call your heart surgery doctor if you have:

- A FEVER over 101.5 degrees F or 38.5 degrees C.
- More REDNESS, SWELLING, PAIN, or DRAINAGE from an incision, OR if an incision opens up.
- CHEST PAIN (not sore incisions) or worsening SHORTNESS OF BREATH.
- A COUGH that brings up thick yellow or bloody mucus.
- Trouble taking your heart or blood pressure MEDICINE for any reason.
- **IF YOU HAVE DIABETES:** please check your blood sugar and write down the number as you were taught (at least twice a day)—call your diabetes doctor for a blood sugar less than 60 or over 250, or if you can't take your diabetes medicine.
- **IF YOU ARE ON THE BLOOD THINNER COUMADIN (WARFARIN)**
Please have your blood drawn as you were told. Your cardiologist or primary doctor will check the results and change the dose as needed.