

GOING HOME

AFTER HEART SURGERY

Post Surgery Instructions Regarding

PHYSIOTHERAPY

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR HEART

POST SURGERY FOLLOW-UP

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Post Surgery Instructions

DO'S

- Practice breathing exercises for 10 min twice daily for a period of 3 months.
- Practice spirometry exercise daily for 5 to 10 times up to 3 months.
- Continue Ankle exercise.

DON'TS

- Avoid forward, backward and sideward bending.
- Avoid lifting of weights (more than 3kgs) for at least 1 month.
- Avoid sitting down & cross legged.
- Don't twist suddenly to the back while walking.
- Avoid activities that can strain or stretch the operated area.

Activity Guidelines.

Walking – twice a day (morning & evening)

Week	Time
1-2	15min
2-4	20min – 25 min
4-6	30min

Stair Climbing – practice daily if recommended by your surgeon & physiotherapist.

- You may climb stairs for 1 flight for 1st 15 days then 2 flights after 15 days.

BATHING:

You may have a both your stitches have been removed. You can wash the incision gently with soap but no scrub it. Avoid very hot water. Rub the wound immediately after your bath. If you notice any discharge, redness or tenderness around the incision site notify your surgeon promptly.

LEG & ANKLE SWELLING:

It is not uncommon to have ankle or leg swelling after surgery. This is because the skin has been removed from your leg & not a sign of disease. Keep the leg elevated by keeping the feet on a small stool or another chair while sitting. This will help the leg swelling to decrease.

DRIVING:

Avoid driving a car or scooter for approximately 6 to 8 weeks after surgery till the sternum (breast bone) is completely healed. Avoid long trips. When travelling. Stop every 1- 2 hours and walk around for few minutes. This will improve the circulation in your legs and help prevents swelling. Air travel as well as journey by train are safe and can be undertaken 2 weeks after surgery.

LIFTING:

It is best not to lift anything heavier than 3kgs since this puts strain on your sternum. This includes carrying things such as suitcases, children and briefcases for 4 -6 weeks from time of surgery.

Do not open stuck windows, push heavy doors or move heavy furniture.

During healing period, you may notice a slight clicking or movement of breast bone when you breathe or turn. This sensation will disappear in 6-12 weeks.

HOUSE HOLD CHORES:

You should not expect to resume total responsibility of household duties, care of children or meal preparation until after the 4 -6 weeks of medical check – up. Activities like moving heavy furniture, regarding, mopping , lifting and carrying items weighting more than 3kgs could exert stress on the breast bone, therefore, these activities should be avoided until healing has completed.

REST:

During the initial recovery period, your body considers all activities as work thus routine activities like bathing, shaving ect can be tiring. This simply means you need more rest, space your activities with rest periods to avoid extreme fatigue. Try 8-10 hrs of sleep each night.

VISITORS:

Too many visitors during the day can be very exhausting and interfere with your recovery. So discourage many visitors. Do not hesitate to excuse yourself from company when you feel tired and need rest.

SEX:

Just every one worries about having sex after the heart surgery. This includes the person who had the surgery as well as his or her partner.

Is sex safe enough after a heart surgery? Will it be too demanding on the heart? **Will it damage the breast bone?**

These things are normal to consider, remember that if you feel good, and are rested. Then sex can be enjoyed as much after the surgery as it was before. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- It takes same amount of energy to have sex as it takes to climb 2 flights of stairs.
- If you are tired and tense, wait until you feel better.
- If certain positions pull on your chest and cause discomfort, try others

If you feel uneasy before sex, allow more time for cuddling. Relax and get in touch with your partner again.

WEIGHT:

Do not put on extra weight keep your weight under control with dieting and regular exercise.

It is better to be slightly underweight than to be overweight.

RETURNING TO WORK:

Most of the patients are able to return within 4-6 weeks after discharge from the hospital. How soon you can turn to work depends on:

1. The type of work you do
2. Your level of physical stamina.
3. The type of surgery you have had.
4. Your doctor will discuss with you the approximate date of your return to work.

CHEST NUMBNESS:

If a Mammary artery has been used for bypass grafting, you may experience a numb sensation in the front of your chest. The artery has been dissected away from the chest wall and small nerve fibers do get cut. This causes the numb sensation. It is difficult to determine how long the numbness will persist. Usually this will go in 6-8 weeks time. Sometimes a small area of numbness may persist. This will not harm the body in anyway and you will get used to it.

SMOKING:

Smoking causes an increase in blood pressure, increase heart rate, causes spasm of your arteries and promotes blockage of bypass grafts.

APPETITE:

It's normal to have much appetite; it takes several weeks for your appetite to return. Many patients notice that their sense of taste is diminished or almost absent. Gradually this will recover.

MEDICATIONS:

As per instructions of your doctor, take your medication regularly. Do not use any medication without prescription of your doctor or don't increase the dosage of medication on your own as it may create complications

EXERCISE GUIDELINES:

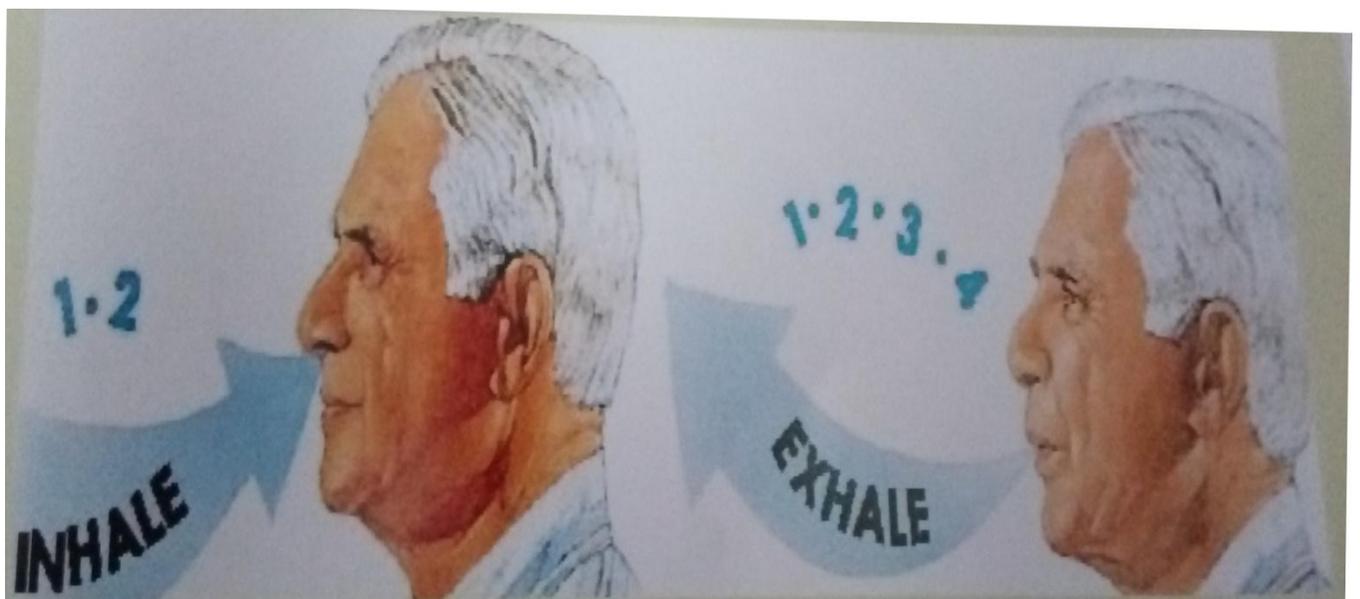
A physiotherapist will assess you individually and gives complete overview how to implement home exercise programme before you get discharged.

- Starting a home exercise programme.
- Exercising regularly is most important aspect. If you have eaten a meal, avoid strenuous exercise for at least 2 hours. If you exercise vigorously first, wait about 20 minutes before eating.
- Use incentive spirometer daily, repeat for 4 -5 sessions for 10-15 times in each session.
- Practice deep breathing exercises thrice a day for next 3 months.
- If your exercise programme has been interrupted for a few days, ease back into the routine, start with a reduced level of exercise and gradually increase it until you are back where you started.
- Always start with....

Breathing exercises:

Sit in a comfortable chair.

- Deep breathing exercises should be done along with incentive spirometer to improve chest expansion as well as the air entry.
- While practicing breathing exercise breathe through the nose and breath out through mouth, pursing lips in order to prolong the exhalation.
- Practice for 10 mins.



STEP – 1

Take deep breath slowly through nose until your chest is full

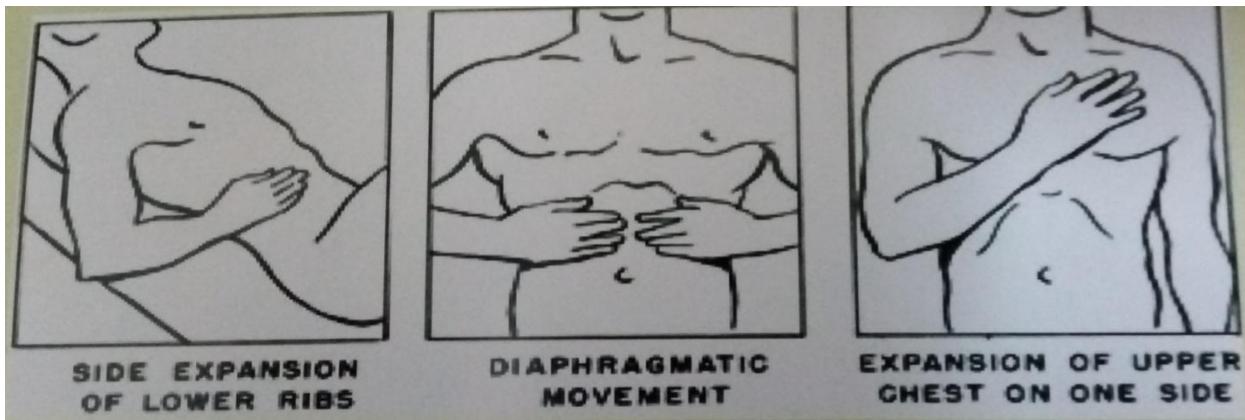
STEP -2

Hold the inspired air for 1-3 sec

STEP -3

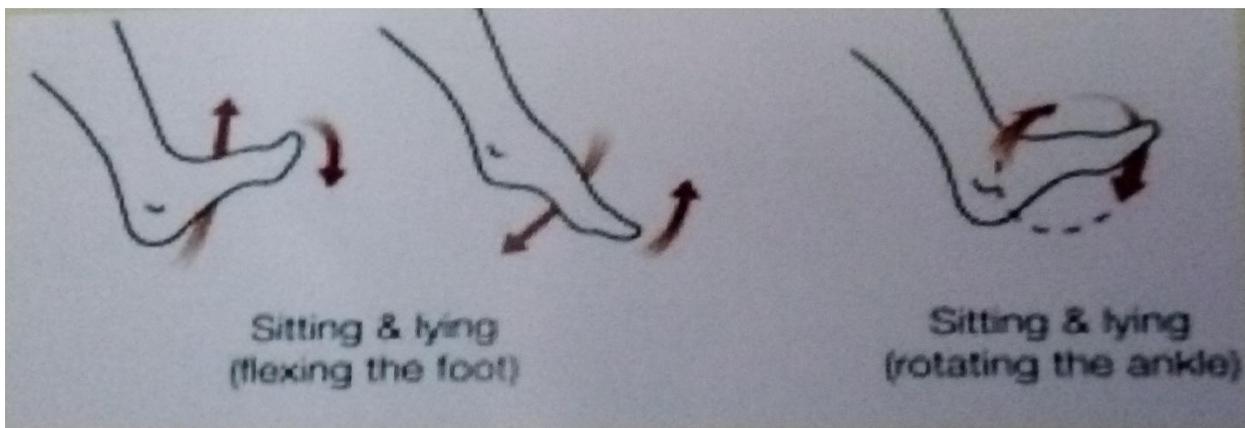
Slowly expel the air through mouth by pursed lips

Repeat the all 3 steps for 10 times.

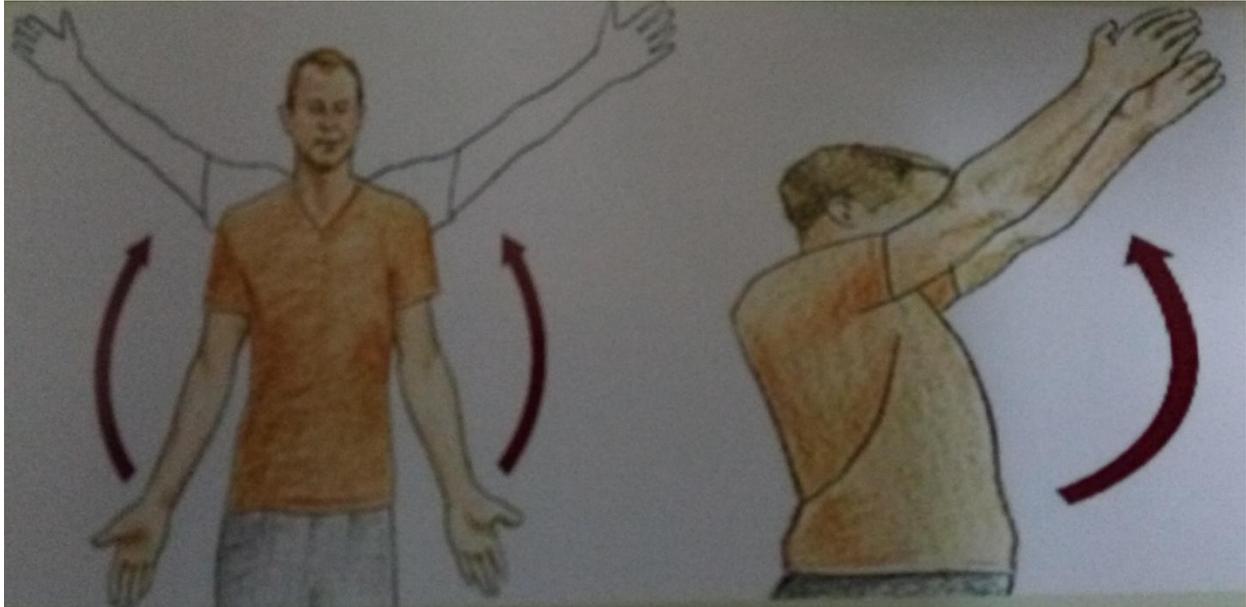


FOOT EXERCISE:

Move your foot up and down for 10 times for 2-3 repetitions.



Shoulder Exercises



10 lifts for 2 repetitions.

- Remember walk at a comfortable pace.
- You can give rest interval while walking if is necessary.
- Walk on a flat surface.
- If you feel dizzy and uncomfortable breath that you can go walking for the day please don't force yourself to walk.
- You should able to talk comfortably while exercising.
- After the walk came back relax by sitting in a chair, then practice all the exercises breathing exercise, ankle exercise, shoulder again for 5-10mins.

STAIRS:

- Climbing stairs does require more energy then walking. Before you leave the hospital, climb stairs with the physical therapist to ensure that you can do so safely. Take your time and go slow. You may want to pause and rest at the mid-point or whenever you feel tired. Use the handrail only for balance: do not use it to full yourself up the stairs.
- It is not mandatory that you practice stair climbing every day.