

# LET'S WALK!

## Why is walking important?

Although you may feel like resting and staying in bed after surgery, walking is one of the best things you can do to avoid problems and recover. **Walking is part of your doctor's orders after your surgery.**

After surgery, your breathing is not as full or deep as it normally is. Walking, breathing exercises, changing positions while in bed and sitting up when you eat all help prevent bacteria growth that can cause lung problems and pneumonia.

Other benefits of walking include:

- Helping oxygen move to all parts of your body
- Helping you breathe normally
- Improving blood flow
- Keeping your muscles toned
- Helping your digestive tract work better
- Helping your urinary tract work better
- Speeding up wound healing
- Helping you feel better

## How do I get started?

**Before you walk for the first time after surgery, tell your nurse, patient care nursing assistant (PCNA) or rehab specialist.** They will make sure you begin safely and help you. They will also work with you to increase your activity level.

- You will have special pumps or stockings on your legs. These help maintain good blood flow. Before you walk, sit up and **dangle your legs off the side of the bed.**
- Sit at the edge of the bed until you are able to stand.
- Tell us if you feel dizzy or light-headed. This feeling usually goes away after sitting at the side of the bed for a few minutes. Dizziness can increase your risk of falling. Your nurse will talk to you and your family about this risk and how to prevent a fall.
- Once you feel steady, **begin to walk slowly and carefully with the help of your nurse or PCNA.**
- **Your goal is to walk 3 to 6 times every day.** At first, walk with a family member or PCNA. With time, you should feel steady enough to walk on your own. You will also be able to walk further. **If you feel dizzy, light-headed, sick to your stomach or short of breath while you are walking, tell your nurse.**
- **Keep increasing your activity!** It is important to keep doing more so your recovery continues. Otherwise, you could feel worse.

## We Are Here to Help!

Healthcare team members are available to help you walk every day at the following times:

Please let us know if you would like us to walk with you. You **must** have a member of your healthcare team help you when you walk the first time after surgery!

If you have any questions about walking after surgery, please ask us!

The back of this sheet has room for you to keep track of your walking. Please record every walk you take.

**HAVE YOU WALKED TODAY? TRACK YOUR PROGRESS**

Date	Walk #1: Activity time	Walk #2: Activity time	Walk #3: Activity time	Walk #4: Activity time	Walk #5: Activity time	Walk #6: Activity time	Notes/Comments

*This information is not intended to replace the medical advice of your doctor or healthcare provider. Please consult your healthcare provider for advice about a specific medical condition.*



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