



Activity Guidelines

Increase activity as tolerated, i.e. you may start with low-impact exercise, such as walking and increase your speed and endurance as tolerated.

Do NOT lift, pull, or push anything weighing more than 10 lbs. (about a gallon of milk) until all drains are removed and you are cleared by the plastic surgeon.

- **Avoid strenuous activity, bending, pushing or holding your breath. For example, do not vacuum, wash the car, do large loads of laundry, or walk the dog until your follow-up visit with your surgeon.**
- **Avoid heavy lifting. Do not lift anything over 5-10 pounds for the first few weeks that you are home from the hospital.**
- **Increase your activities a little each day.** Walking is a good exercise. Plan rest periods and try to avoid hills if possible. Remember, exercise should not increase your pain or cause pain.
- **Reaching:** When you have to reach things on or near the floor, always squat (bending the knees), rather than bending over at the waist.
- **Stairs:** Try to limit using the stairs to 1 – 2 times per day during the first week at home. Climb steps one at a time, placing both feet on the step before moving to the next one.
- **Driving:** You should **not** drive for 2-4 weeks after surgery. You should discuss driving with your surgeon /nurse practitioner /physician assistant. You may ride in a car. When in the car, avoid sitting in one position for too long. If you must take long car rides, do not ride for more than 60 minutes without taking a break to stretch (walk for several minutes and change position). **ABSOLUTELY NO DRIVING WHILE ON NARCOTIC PAIN MEDICATION.**

Meals

- Resume your usual diet when you return home. Avoid alcoholic beverages while taking new medications.
- Increase your fluid and fiber intake as narcotic pain medications may cause constipation (difficulty having a bowel movement). It is important to be aware of your bowel habits so you don't develop severe constipation. Call the office if this occurs for more than 3 days or if you have stomach pain.

Questions

- Any questions may be directed to your surgeon or nurse practitioner/ physician assistant.
- If you are calling with **an urgent medical issue**, please state that it is an “urgent issue” and needs to be discussed in less than 24 hours (i.e. pain unrelieved with medications, wound breakdown/infection, or new neurological symptoms).