



INSTRUCTIONS FOR HOME CARE AFTER CARDIAC SURGERY

Helping your child heal, recover, and thrive



OUR GOAL

A safe recovery at home and a healthy heart for the future.



FOLLOW-UP CARE

- Keep all scheduled follow-up appointments with your cardiologist and cardiac surgeon.
- **Keep regular cardiac follow-ups in the office.**
- Regular follow-up is essential to monitor healing, heart function, and recovery progress.

WHEN TO CALL THE CARDIOLOGY OR CV SURGERY TEAM

Call the Cardiology or CV Surgery office **IMMEDIATELY** if any of the following occur:

- Increased work of breathing
- Diaphoresis (excessive sweating)
- Poor appetite or difficulty feeding
- Fever greater than 100.4°F (38°C)
- Erythema (redness) around the incision
- Exudate or drainage from the incision
- Increasing swelling or separation of the incision
- Any other concerning symptoms



Please do not hesitate to contact our office with any questions or concerns.



ACTIVITY RESTRICTIONS

FOR 6 WEEKS AFTER SURGERY



Pick up your child using the "scoop technique" (back and buttocks).



No gym class, recess, sports, bike riding, skateboarding, trampoline, or any activity that could result in falling on the chest.



Swimming is not permitted for 4 weeks from the surgery date or until the wound is well healed.

AFTER 6 WEEKS



The patient can resume all activities 6 weeks after surgery unless otherwise directed by your surgical or cardiology team.

WALKING & EXERCISE



Walking is encouraged and is one of the best forms of recovery exercise. Gradually increase activity as tolerated.



SURGICAL WOUND CARE



Wash the wound daily with soap and water.



Assess the wound for any redness, swelling, drainage, or any signs and symptoms of infection.



Keep the wound clean and dry. No lotion, powders, oils, etc., to the wound for 4 weeks.



Call the surgical team with any questions or concerns about the surgical wound.



PAIN MANAGEMENT

The patient may use Tylenol (Acetaminophen) and Ibuprofen as directed by your healthcare provider.



POSTPERICARDIOTOMY SYNDROME (PPS)

Close monitoring is needed for symptoms of postpericardiotomy syndrome, an immune reaction that affects some patients up to six weeks after open-heart surgery.

Signs may include, but are not limited to:



Unexplained high fever (not responding to Tylenol)



Loss of appetite



Chest pain



Pallor



Irritability



Puffy face



Shortness of breath or respiratory distress

If any of these symptoms occur, contact your Cardiology or CV Surgery team promptly for evaluation.



SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION

Seek urgent medical care if your child develops:

- Severe breathing difficulty
- Blue or gray discoloration of lips or skin
- Loss of consciousness
- Severe chest pain
- Rapid worsening of symptoms
- Signs of stroke or neurological changes
- Significant bleeding from the surgical site



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