

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES UPON DISCHARGE

You have been participating in a daily activity program during your hospitalization with the help of your Nurses and your Physical Therapist. Upon discharge it is important that you continue with a regular activity program to help you maintain and improve your activity tolerance. Regular exercise will also help you maintain weight and promote healing.

- Strive to be active everyday
- Find an activity you enjoy doing (i.e. walking, hiking, riding an exercise cycle))
- Start with a reasonable goal of 10 minutes, try to increase a little every week until you can maintain up to 30 minutes at a time,
- Intensity does not matter as much as endurance does. Find a pace you can sustain without needing to rest
- The Physical Therapist assigned to you will give you further guidelines before discharge for any specific needs you might have

STERNAL GUIDELINES UPON DISCHARGE

For surgery, your sternum (breastbone) was cut. Your breastbone was then closed back together with wire sutures to aid in the healing process. For eight weeks after the surgery, you need to protect your sternum so that it will heal properly.

Please follow these guidelines, known as sternal precautions. If your doctor or surgeon has given you more instructions, please follow their instructions.

For the first 8 weeks after surgery:

- No lifting, pushing or pulling more than 10 pounds.
- Use your arms minimally when standing or sitting.
- When coughing or sneezing hold a pillow against your incision for support.
- Do not allow others to pull on your hands, wrists, or arms when assisting you.
- Do not lie on your stomach. Sleep on your side or your back.
- You may move your arms in a pain free range but limit any overhead movements
- Stop any activity that increases pain.
- Do not hold your breath.
- Breathe out when you feel the need to bear down.

Notify your doctor if:

- Your surgical incision is pulling apart or opening.
- Your sternum feels like it is popping, clicking or moving.
- There is any drainage from your incision.

