

Activities and exercises to help you recover after surgery

You will feel better if you move. Every little bit of activity helps.

- Walk around the unit.
- Sit in a chair or on the edge of the bed for meals.
- Sit in a chair when visiting.

Keep Safe!
Ask us how you can move safely.

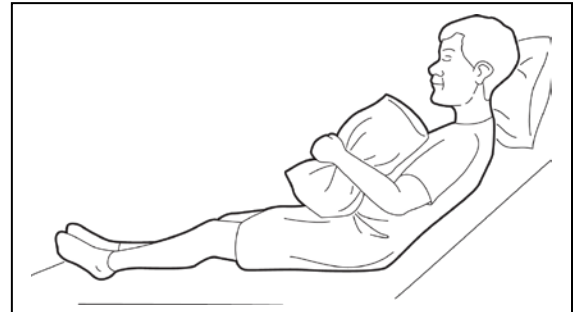
During the first few days after surgery, do these breathing and leg exercises every hour that you are awake. You may want to practice these at home before your surgery.

Deep breathing and coughing

Deep breathing and coughing helps to:

- keep your lungs expanding fully
- clear mucus from your lungs and throat
- reduce the chance of getting a chest infection

You may find coughing is more comfortable if you hold onto your incision with your hands, or hold a pillow over your incision.



How to do deep breathing and coughing

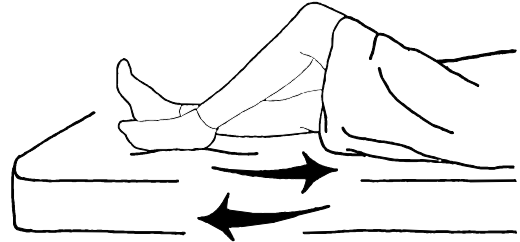
1. It is helpful to do these exercises with the head of your bed raised, sitting in a chair or on the edge of the bed.
2. Hold your incision with a pillow or folded blanket.
3. Take a slow deep breath in through your nose and fill your lungs.
4. Breathe out slowly through an open mouth for 3 to 5 seconds.
5. Repeat 5 times.
6. Then take a deep breath and make a strong, deep cough. Just clearing your throat is not enough.

Leg exercises

Leg exercises help to keep blood circulating well in your legs. It will also help if you do not cross your legs when you are lying or sitting.

Exercise One: Slide your heel

- Lie in bed with both legs straight.
- Bend one knee, sliding your foot up the bed.
- Then gently slide this foot down the bed, until the leg is straight.
- Repeat 10 times with this leg.
- Repeat the exercise with the other leg.



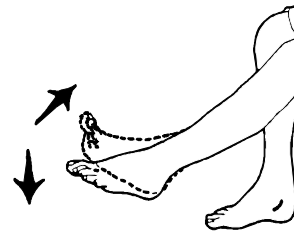
Exercise Two: Point and flex your feet

If you are lying down:

- Straighten both legs.
- Point and flex your feet 10 times.

If you are sitting up:

- Extend one leg, straight out in front of you.
- Point and flex your foot 10 times.
- Relax and lower your leg.
- Repeat with the other leg.



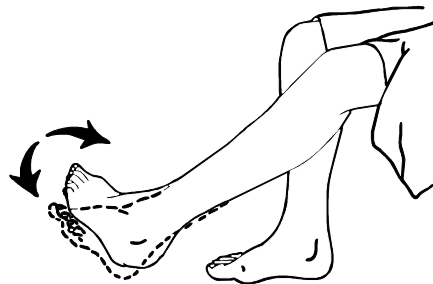
Exercise Three: Circle your foot

If you are lying down:

- Straighten both legs.
- Circle one foot clockwise 10 times.
- Circle this foot counter-clockwise 10 times.
- Repeat with the other foot.

If you are sitting up:

- Extend one leg, straight out in front of you.
- Circle your foot clockwise 10 times.
- Circle this foot counter-clockwise 10 times.
- Relax and lower your leg.
- Repeat with the other foot.



Adapted with permission from: Exercises After Surgery