







Care After Lung Surgery — At a Glance

For an Emergency, Call 911

<p>Activity</p> 	<p>Incision Site Care</p> 	<p>Medicines</p> 	<p>Self-care</p> 	<p>When to Call for Help</p> 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Balance rest and activity. ■ Avoid sleeping longer than 1 hour at time during the day. ■ For 3 to 4 weeks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — do not lift anything heavier than 10 pounds — do not vacuum, shovel, golf, bowl, play tennis, swim or hunt. ■ For 4 weeks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Do not drive. (Talk with your doctor about when you can drive.) — Use your spirometer every 2 hours while you are awake. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Your incision will take 4 to 6 weeks to heal. It is normal have mild swelling, bruising, itching, soreness, numbness and straw-colored drainage. ■ Check your incision every day. (You may need to use a mirror.) ■ Clean your incision with mild soap and water. ■ Keep a bandage over the chest tube sites until a scab forms or the drainage stops. ■ Do not put ointments, creams, lotions, cologne or perfume on your incision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Take all of your medicines as prescribed. ■ You will receive a prescription for pain medicine. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — As you start to feel less pain, take less medicine. — You may take acetaminophen (Tylenol® or Extra Strength Tylenol®). — If the prescription medicine causes constipation (unable to have a regular bowel movement), eat more fruits, vegetables and grains. ■ Do not stop taking any medicine without your doctor’s approval. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Eat healthful foods low in salt, fat and cholesterol. ■ Drink lots of water unless your doctor gives you other directions. ■ Relax and manage your stress. ■ Keep all appointments with your health care team, even if you are feeling better. ■ Write down any questions or concerns for your health care team. ■ Do not use tobacco. If you need help quitting, ask your doctor.  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Call your surgeon if you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — have chills and fever higher than 101 F — have increased soreness, drainage, swelling or redness at the incision sites — need more prescription pain medicine. ■ Call your doctor if you: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — are not sure what you are feeling — have concerns — gain 3 pounds in 1 day or 5 pounds in 1 week.