

Your Daily Checklist After Spine Surgery

Rehabilitation

Your success with rehabilitation largely depends on your commitment to follow the program developed by your health care team. Use the checklist below to make sure you're completing everything you need to do each day to help you recover well from your surgery.

Your Daily Checklist

- Ankle pumps:**
Do 10 ankle pumps every hour while you're awake. This will help to prevent blood clots.
- Exercises (if you have them):**
Do 10 of each exercise, 2 to 3 times a day. Your physical therapist will teach you the exercises you need to do.
- Brace (if you have one):**
Practice putting on, taking off and adjusting your brace. Make sure a member of your health care team is in the room to help you if needed.
- Ice packs:**
Apply ice packs to your surgery site as often as possible. Apply ice for 15 to 20 minutes at a time. This will help to decrease swelling and discomfort.
- Sit in a chair at meal times:**
Sit in your chair with your legs down and feet on the floor while you eat (as you feel comfortable). Limit sitting to no more than 60 minutes.
- Follow your precautions:**
Avoid forward or side bending, twisting, pushing, pulling, lifting and reaching.
- Call, don't fall.**
Please partner with your health care team to stay safe. Call them whenever you need to get up.
- Walking:**
Besides your exercise program, you must leave time for walking. Walking helps build your strength and endurance.
While you are in the hospital:
 - Walk 4 times a day, including in the evening and at night. A member of your health care team may walk with you for safety. **Do not** walk by yourself unless a member of your health care team says it is OK.
 - If there are walking signs posted in the hospital, use them to help set goals for yourself.
 - Tell a member of your health care team if you are feeling dizzy or lightheaded.

Whom to Ask Questions

Ask a member of your health care team if you have questions.