



Staying active after surgery

Enhanced recovery after surgery program

TO BETTER GUIDE YOU

**No matter your age,
moving after surgery
is important.**

**Here's what you can do
to help recover more
quickly.**

On average, it takes this long
to regain the strength
lost from staying in bed:

**1 day in bed =
3 days of recovery**

**1 week in bed =
3 weeks of recovery**



Important

If you had hip surgery, follow
the instructions in the "Total hip
replacement: Recovery" handout

Staying active is important

It's important to move, even while you're in the hospital. Moving helps
you return to your normal activities more quickly.

Staying active can help:

- keep your muscles strong
- improve blood flow and reduce the risk of blood clots
- increase appetite and help digestion
- reduce the risk of pressure injuries (skin damage caused by staying
in the same position for too long)

**Your first time getting out of bed after surgery will be with the
help of a member of your care team. They will show you how
to move safely.**

Ideas to help you move more

It's important to move often while respecting your limits.

- Get out of bed several times a day, as much as you are able.
- Sit in a chair and take every opportunity to get up and walk,
such as going to the bathroom or walking in the hallway.
- Eat your meals sitting in a chair.
- Do your personal care activities by yourself, as much as possible.
- Spread your activities throughout the day, a little at a time.
- Take advantage of visits from family to go for a walk with them.

Walking 5 minutes twice a day provides the same benefits as walking
for 10 minutes without stopping. If you have difficulty getting up
or walking, ask a family member, friend, or member of your care team
for help.

Tips

- Take your pain medication 30 minutes before your exercise, as needed.
- Do your exercises.
- Apply ice for 15 minutes.

To help prevent falls, wear closed-toe, flat, non-slip shoes. Ask your family or support person to bring your shoes, cane, or walker.

Moving is easy!

After surgery, it's normal to have pain. Do your exercises according to your tolerance

Do **1 to 2 exercises** per day. Hold each position for a few seconds and repeat each exercise **5 to 10 times**.



© CHUM

1. Squeeze a towel with your hand for 5 seconds. Then, do the same with the other hand.



© CHUM

2. Inhale while lifting your arms and exhale while lowering them. (Can be done in bed or in a chair.)



© CHUM

3. Tighten your buttocks as much as possible. Hold for 5 seconds and relax. (Can be done in bed or in a chair.)



© CHUM

4. While sitting in a chair, straighten one leg while keeping your thigh in contact with the seat. Then return to the starting position. Repeat with the other leg.

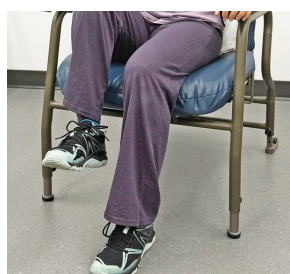


© CHUM



© CHUM

5. Lift your toes while keeping your heels on the ground. Then point your toes to lift your heels. This exercise can also be done in bed.



© CHUM



© CHUM

6. In the bed or in a chair, bring your knee towards your chest. Then return to the starting position. Repeat with the other leg.

Important

Do not do exercise #6 if you've had hip surgery. See the "Total hip replacement: Recovery" handout.

This document is protected under [Creative Commons](#) (CC) license

Texte adapté de la fiche santé *Rester actif à l'hôpital* produite par le Centre de littératie en santé du CHUM : chumontreal.qc.ca/centre-litteratie-sante.