

Support

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Personalize with patient's name:

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82042

After Heart Valve Surgery

For the first six to eight weeks after surgery, you'll gain a little more energy and strength each day. Your doctor will discuss what you can and can't do as you recover. You'll have good days and bad days—remember to take things slowly and rest when you get tired.

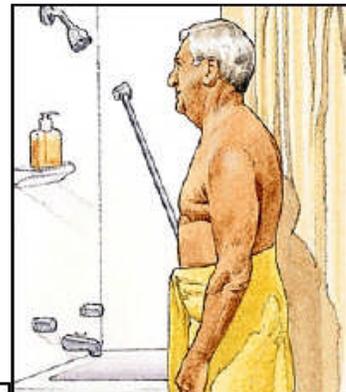
Walking

- Walking pumps blood to your heart, improving blood flow throughout your whole body.
- Begin with a short walk (maybe 5 minutes) and walk for a little longer each day.
- Choose a safe place with a level surface—like a local park or mall.
- Wear supportive shoes to prevent injury to knees and ankles.
- Walk with someone. It's more fun and helps you stay with it.



Showering

- Avoid using very hot water—it can affect your circulation and make you dizzy.
- Ask someone to stand nearby in case you need help.

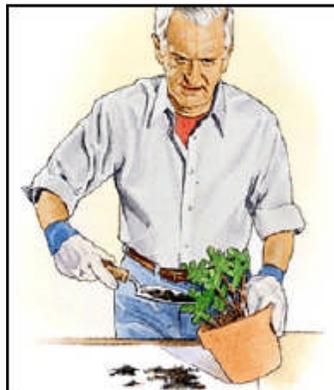


Driving

- Let others drive for the first 3–6 weeks after your surgery.
- Motion can worsen pain and some of your medications may make you drowsy.

Easing into Activity

- After a few weeks, you can start doing light work around your home.
- Don't lift anything that weighs more than five pounds.
- Avoid activities such as mowing or vacuuming, which can strain your breastbone.
- Your doctor can advise you about the best plan for returning to work.
- Unless your doctor advises otherwise, you can resume having sex as soon as you feel comfortable.



Medications Your Doctor May Prescribe

- Your doctor may prescribe an anticoagulant medication to prevent bleeding or blood clots that could lead to a stroke.
- Your doctor may prescribe an antibiotic. This helps prevent infection that could scar and destroy your heart valve. You will be given instructions on when to take this medication, such as before dental work, surgery, or medical procedures.

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