



HOME CARE AFTER SCOLIOSIS SURGERY

This handout was written to answer some of the questions about activities and exercise after your scoliosis surgery. Feel free to ask your doctor or nurse to go over any information you do not understand before you go home. If questions arise after you go home, call your doctor.

WHAT ACTIVITIES WILL I BE ABLE TO DO?

Below is a list of activities you will be able to do each month after your surgery. Please remember these guidelines are general and your doctor may make different recommendations based on individual situations. Please talk with the doctor before resuming physical activities that are not addressed here.

7 – 10 Days: Call and make follow-up appointment with physician

Permitted activities include:

- Sit up or stand for brief periods. (It is normal to feel somewhat weak after any major surgery. You will tire easily).
- Walking gradually longer distances.
- Shower with the brace on (as instructed)
- Go up or down stairs
- Carry up to 12 pounds, using good body mechanics (this includes no more than 12 pounds in book bags)
- Take daily vitamins with iron until supply is gone.
- DO NOT OVER EXERT YOURSELF.

14 Days: Remove remaining Steri-Strips

Three Weeks

Permitted activities include:

- If you feel well enough, you may return to school.
- Each child responds differently to surgery. Some patients return to school beginning with half days and progressing to full days as tolerated.
- May carry schoolbooks at weights no heavier than 20 pounds

- Short road trips, such as visiting friends or going to church are permitted. Long road trips require 10-15 minute rest periods to walk and stretch after 30 each minutes of traveling. (A healing back tires easily after long periods of sitting).

Six Weeks

Permitted activities include:

- Riding bicycle
- Shooting baskets from stationary position (NOT playing a game).
- Resume weight lifting with back support-supportive curls and quadriceps curls and quadriceps strengthening, only low weight reps. (NO dead lifts, twisting, jerking exercises).
- Swimming and swim play (no diving, or jumping from side of pool).

Three Months After Surgery

Permitted activities include:

- Resume jogging
- Cross-country skiing (NO downhill skiing or sledding)
- Bench pressing with low weight and high repetitions.

Four to Six Months

Permitted activities include:

- Participation in varsity or competitive league games
- Resume all previous running activities
- Diving from side of pool (NO springboard diving)
- Attend gym class

One Year After Surgery

Permitted activities include:

- Resume most activities without restriction.
Please talk with the doctor regarding activities where high velocity falls are likely, such as water skiing, downhill skiing and horseback riding.
- May participate in Kings Island/Beach-type activities
- Motorcycling, free-flying and parachuting are always dangerous

WHY SHOULD I EXERCISE AFTER SURGERY?

1. Exercise will help you regain and increase your appetite.
2. Exercise may make it easier for you to sleep soundly.

3. Exercise will improve your balance.
4. Exercise will promote healing.

IS THERE ANY TIME I SHOULD CALL MY DOCTOR?

After you are home, you and your family will need to call the doctor if you experience any of these problems.

- Drainage from the incision site
- Problems with the brace
- Pressure areas from brace
- Foul odor from under the brace
- Numbness, tingling or weakness in the legs
- Fever
- Any increase in pain
- Any other concerns or questions regarding care

You will probably see the doctor for a recheck at one, four and seven months after surgery and less often after that.

The information contained in this handout is for general information only and should not be considered complete. For specific information about home care after scoliosis surgery, please ask your doctor or nurse practitioner.

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