

# McKenzie Surgery Center

## Advice on how to promote recovery from surgery

We would like to share with you some recommendations on how to promote your recovery from the surgical procedure that you have recently undergone at the McKenzie Surgery Center. Please use this information in addition to the instructions that you have received from your surgeon's office. Our combined goal is for you to have a safe and uneventful recovery from your procedure and rapid return to normal function. There are several important matters that we would like to cover with you in the material below.

### Avoidance of breathing difficulties after general anesthesia

1. Take deep breaths every hour while you are awake.
2. Change positions you are lying, or sitting in at least every two hours while awake.

### Avoidance of pain that becomes so intense that it cannot be controlled

1. Take your pain medicine as prescribed.
2. If you experience side effects (itching, nausea, vomiting) and they are a problem for you, contact your physician.
3. Many pain medicines can be constipating please follow instructions listed below.

### DVT and Pulmonary Embolism

A rare, but very serious condition that can occur after general anesthesia is that of deep vein thrombosis (blood clots in leg veins) and pulmonary embolism (blood clots travel from legs to lungs). This is a potentially fatal condition, yet can be treated if recognized early. First, you should know what are the signs and symptoms of this and second, what to do about it.

### Activity after surgery-avoid immobility

1. Do not lay in bed or in a recliner for long periods of time. Get up and move around, changing position. You may require assistance from a caregiver.
2. Perform hourly, while awake, alternating ankle flexion (stretching toes, foot toward your head as best as you can), with foot extension (toe pointing) and ankle circles.
3. If your activity is **not restricted**, make a point to get up and walk as much as possible, even it is for short distances throughout the day.

### Deep Vein Thrombosis

1. Usually occurs in one leg and may be above or below the knee
2. Swelling: one calf or thigh may be larger than the other
3. Swelling along a vein of the leg
4. Feeling of increased warmth in the area of swelling or pain
5. Leg pain may increase when standing or walking
6. Tenderness of the leg or calf that may be confined to one area
7. A change in leg color (bluish or red)

**What to do: Call your physician's office regarding this matter and have it evaluated.**

### Pulmonary Embolism:

1. Chest pain that gets worse with a deep breath, coughing or chest movement
2. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
3. Coughing up blood
4. Rapid heart rate
5. Sweating
6. Lightheadedness

**What to do: Call your physician's office regarding this matter and have it evaluated. If symptoms are severe, call 911.**

### Adequate Water Intake after surgery

1. Ensure that you are taking adequate fluids after surgery to produce clear-colored urine (a sign of good hydration).

### Constipation

1. Incorporate additional fiber in your diet
2. If you experience constipation, discuss with your physician when you can use non-constipating analgesics such as Tylenol® (acetaminophen).