

After Your Bypass: Pacing Yourself



After your bypass surgery, it's important to get up and move around to regain strength in your muscles. Moving around and doing things also helps keep your spirits up. But you need to pace yourself. Doing too much won't hurt your heart, but it will make you tire more easily. Here are a few tips to help you get moving without overdoing it.

Dress each morning

When you get out of bed in the morning, get dressed. You will feel more like doing things if you are wearing daytime clothes. Getting dressed may also help keep you from feeling depressed. Wear comfortable clothing and shoes. Try wearing button-up shirts at first so that you don't strain your incision by pulling a shirt over your head.



Plan your day

Planning your day will help keep you from getting too tired.

- Plan your day so you won't have to climb stairs more than 1 or 2 times.
- Allow plenty of time for each thing you do. Remember, you won't be able to do things as quickly right now.

- Stop and rest whenever you get tired. You can finish what you're doing later, when you are rested.
- Don't take naps during the day. This is so you can get a full night's rest later. Keep in mind that you may have trouble sleeping for a while after your surgery. Focusing on solid sleep at night may help you from feeling overtired too quickly when doing regular day-time activities.
- Limit the number of visitors you have and how long they stay. Visiting for more than a few minutes may tire you at first.
- Try to limit any trips out to 1 hour for the first week you are home. You can gradually increase the time as you get stronger and feel up to it. Until you have been cleared to drive by your surgeon, you will need to have someone drive you for trips out of the house.

If you need to rest for more than 1 hour after activity, you are most likely pushing yourself too hard. Do a little less the next day.

Stop any activity that gives you chest pain, dizziness, feeling faint, rapid or irregular heartbeat, or shortness of breath. Rest until these symptoms ease. **Call 911 or get immediate medical attention** at your nearest emergency room if these symptoms last longer than 20 minutes or continue to worsen. Even if the symptoms go away quickly, let your provider know right away.

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