

Preventing Pneumonia in the Hospital and at Home

Follow these 5 steps until your follow up appointment.

1. Walk as much as you can, at least 3 times a day, unless your doctor says otherwise.
2. Sit upright to eat and drink.
3. Use your incentive spirometer:
 - Hold the spirometer in an upright position
 - Breathe out normally
 - Place lips tightly around the mouthpiece
 - Slowly breathe in, as if you were sipping liquid through a straw, to raise the ball
 - When you cannot breathe in any more air, remove the mouthpiece and breath out
 - Repeat 10 times every hour while you are awake



4. Do deep breathing exercises:
 - Place a hand on your abdomen
 - Breathe in through your nose, slowly
 - Inhale through your nose slowly – this warms, moistens, and filters the air – hold for 3 seconds
 - Slowly breathe out through pursed lips (as if you were blowing out a candle)
 - Do 3 breaths, on the 3rd breath, cough instead of breathing out
 - Repeat 3-4 times every 2 hours while awake.



5. Take care of your mouth:
 - Brush your teeth and use mouth rinse 2x a day.
 - In the hospital, your nurse may give you a special chlorhexidine mouth rinse, use it 2x a day (after breakfast & bedtime). Your nurse will perform oral care for you, if you are unable to do it yourself.
 - At home, use a mouthwash that does not contain alcohol. (Check the label.)



A Tool to Help Prevent Pneumonia after Surgery

Preventing pneumonia is very important and we need your help while you are recovering. Moving out of bed and walking soon after surgery can help prevent pneumonia in most patients. Good oral care removes germs from your mouth so they can't travel down your airway and into the lungs. Keep the head of your bed at a 30 degree angle at all times while in the hospital.

Instructions: Check the box each time you accomplish each activity. If you have difficulty getting out of bed, sitting up in the chair, or walking, please ask us for help.

Same Day as Surgery

Ambulation – Dangle legs at edge of bed ☐
Out of bed (OOB) to the chair – 3 times, if tolerated ☐ ☐ ☐

Postoperative Day #1 – Date _____

Walk in room-sit in chair - 3 times ☐ ☐ ☐
Incentive spirometer-10 workouts ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Postoperative Day #2 – Date _____

Walk in room - sit in chair - 3 times ☐ ☐ ☐
Walk in hall – 100 feet – 3 times ☐ ☐ ☐
Incentive spirometer - 10 workouts ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

If you are in the hospital for more than 2 days, continue these activities and continue using your Incentive spirometer.



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