

# Activities of Daily Living After Your Heart Procedure

*Important precautions and guidelines*

*This handout gives important guidelines to follow after your heart procedure to help your healing and keep you safe.*

## Your Procedure

**You recently had this procedure:**

- ☐ Transfemoral valve replacement
- ☐ Transapical valve replacement
- ☐ Mitral clip procedure
- ☐ Cardiac catheterization

Type: \_\_\_\_\_

## General Precautions

Follow these precautions until: \_\_\_\_\_

### For Your Safety

- Do **not** lift anything that weighs more than 5 to 10 pounds (a gallon of milk weighs almost 9 pounds). This includes grocery bags, laundry baskets, babies, and pets. Ask for help as needed.
- Do **not** hold your breath or strain or bear down while getting up or having a bowel movement.

### Bathing

- You may shower. Gently clean your incision with soap and water and gently pat to dry. Do **not** rub or scrub.
- Do **not** soak in a bathtub or hot tub or go swimming until your provider tells you it is okay.
- Do **not** apply any lotion or powder on your incision site.
- If it is hard for you to shower, your occupational therapist (OT) may suggest you use tools such as a shower chair, a hand-held shower head, a non-skid mat, a long-handled sponge, or a grab bar.



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## Getting Dressed

- Sit down to get dressed to avoid falling.
- If it is hard for you to put on your underwear, pants, socks, and shoes, your OT may suggest you use tools such as a reacher, dressing stick, sock aid, and long-handled shoehorn.

## Extra Instructions

### ☐ Transapical Valve Replacement

If you had a transapical valve replacement, follow all instructions listed under “General Precautions.” Also follow these guidelines for 2 weeks **when using your arm that is on the same side as your surgery** (your surgical arm):

- Do **not** lift your elbow above your shoulder.
- Do **not** reach behind you when bathing, using the toilet, or putting on or taking off your clothes. Use your non-surgical arm.

### ☐ Radial Artery Access

If you had your radial artery accessed for your procedure, follow all instructions listed under “General Precautions.” Also follow these guidelines **when using your arm that is on the same side as your surgery** (your surgical arm):

- For 48 hours, do **not** lift, push, or pull anything.
- For 5 days, do **not** lift anything that weighs more than 5 pounds. (A 2-liter bottle of water weighs almost 5 pounds.)



*After heart surgery, be very careful about how you use your arms.*

## Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

**Occupational Therapy:**  
206.598.4830

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