

## POST- HEART SURGERY

<i>Client:</i>	<i>Date:</i>
<i>Clinician:</i>	

You will need at least 2–3 weeks of healing before you can go back to your normal routine. While you are healing, follow your doctor’s advice.

### Follow-Up Visits

Follow-up visits with your doctor help make sure that you’re healing well. To check your healing, you may have tests. These may include chest x-rays, echocardiograms to show the movement of your heart muscle, and electrocardiograms (ECGs) to show if there are any changes in your heart’s rhythm. If you are taking medications, blood tests may be done to check your medication levels.

### Incision Care

Your incisions may be bruised, itchy, numb, or sore for a few days. If strips of tape were used to close an incision, your doctor will tell you when you can wet and remove them. It’s often in about a week. When you shower, gently wash your incisions with warm (not hot) water and soap. Avoid tub baths until your doctor says they’re okay, as they affect your blood flow. To help prevent infection, avoid using skin lotions around incisions.

### Call your nurse or doctor if you have:

- Chills, sweating, or a fever over 100.0°F for more than a day
- A cold or infection
- A heartbeat that seems fast or slow, or that is skipping beats
- No bowel movement within 2 days of surgery
- Shortness of breath while resting
- Weight gain of more than 3 pounds in 1 day or 5 pounds in 1 week
- An incision that swells, oozes, or becomes red or tender
- Pain in your chest or shoulder that gets worse with deep breathing or coughing
- Pulse over 110 beats per minute

*Adapted from Krames On-line*

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### IMPORTANT NOTICE

Contact the on-call nurse if you are experiencing any change in your current health condition.  
For ALL emergencies requiring IMMEDIATE medical attention, call 911.  
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