

Cardiopulmonary Patient Recovery Guide

Tips for Success

As part of the recovery process, you may have previously participated in a variety of skilled programming, potentially including physical, occupational and/or speech therapy. If medically cleared to begin independent exercises, the following tips are provided to support you in continued recovery*.

- **Positioning:** Spending many hours lying on your back can lead to deconditioning and other medical complications.
 - a. Sitting upright as much as possible throughout the day is recommended.
 - b. If medically cleared to do so, walk around your space as tolerated.
 - c. Change positions regularly. Consider different positions such as a side-lying position or lying on your stomach with pillows to support you to encourage carbon dioxide/oxygen exchange.
- **Breathing:** Practice breathing strategies that emphasize full, prolonged exhale while puffing your cheeks out and blowing out long and steady. Reference Reliant's *Breathing Exercises* handout.
- **Monitoring:** An exercise log can be provided to track and monitor how your body is responding to exercise.
 - a. Utilize a pulse oximeter to monitor heart rate and oxygen levels during exercise.
 - b. Check and log your heart rate and oxygen levels before, during, and after exercise.
- **Walking:** During the recovery period and once approved by the physician, walking is encouraged to improve overall conditioning. Follow these guidelines:
 - a. Week 1: 5 minutes, 5 times per day
 - b. Week 2: 10 minutes, 3 times per day
 - c. Week 3: 15 minutes, 2 times per day
- **Nutrition and Hydration:** Even though you may not be hungry or thirsty it is important to fuel your body during recovery. Staying hydrated will assist in replacing your body's fluid loss as well as thin your respiratory secretions.
 - a. Drink water or clear liquids every hour.
 - b. Keep liquids at your bedside/chairside to sip throughout the day and night.
 - c. Monitor for signs of dehydration.

If you experience chest pain, palpitations, exhaustion or dizziness/light headedness stop breathing exercises. If symptoms do not subside, contact your physician.

* If required and medically appropriate, wear a mask when exercising in a public area.