

Tips for Recovering from Surgery



Your support network

- 1 Discuss your treatment with your friends and family.
- 2 Ensure someone is available for the first week you are home.
- 3 Write up the phone numbers of your helpers and your local healthcare or home-care provider.
- 4 Don't shy away from help and friendly visits.
- 5 Look into joining support groups and communities on social media for people who have heart valve disease.



What don't I know?

Here are some questions you might not have asked:

- 1 How much weight can I lift safely, and how soon?
- 2 Who can handle my responsibilities, such as child-care and pet-care?
- 3 How long should I expect to take off work, and what is the process if I need to extend that?
- 4 How long until I can drive a car?

The more we listen, the more lives we save



Post-treatment pain management

Plan your environment and re-read your discharge instructions:

- 1 Discuss pain management with your doctors before and after the procedure.
- 2 Remember pain medication can also reduce inflammation and help you heal.
- 3 Verify your medications, and track your doses, too.
- 4 Be gentle and don't expect too much of yourself too soon.
- 5 Plan ahead and think about the spaces around you. If your favorite book that you plan on reading when you get home after the hospital is on an awkward shelf in your spare room, move it so it's easy to access!
- 6 Lay out clothes that are easy to put on with limited mobility.



How can I help myself?

Each person's recovery pathway will be unique to them, and subject to various factors. Here are a few things that can help:

- 1 Listen to your doctor's directions. Familiarize yourself with the information given to you.
- 2 Eat a variety of healthy foods during your recovery, as good nutrition helps fuel healthy cell growth and repair. Prepare meals before you go for treatment and freeze them. This makes things simpler when you begin to cook for yourself again and can help those looking after you.
- 3 Remember to rest. This is a part of your recovery too!
- 4 Accept help. Whether it's making a cup of tea or assisting with your day to day tasks, this is the time to accept help when it is offered!
- 5 Make sure you have plenty of things to keep you engaged as you rest and recover!