

Discharge Instructions after Heart Surgery

PLEASE CALL CONGENITAL HEART (formerly PCA) IF:

- Your child has a fever of 101 orally or rectally or has chills
- The incision is painful, opens up, has cloudy yellow or green drainage or has a bad smell, or is red and the redness is spreading
- Your child has trouble breathing or has color changes (gray, pale or blue) of the skin, not lips or fingernails
- You have any questions about medications
- Your child has vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Your child has trouble eating, tires easily while eating or is not interested in eating at all
- Your child has signs of dehydration; dry mouth, no tears, little or no urine output

ACTIVITY RESTRICTIONS

INFANTS

- No daycare until after the first follow-up visit
- Make sure all visitors and family members wash their hands prior to coming in contact with your child
- No contact with visitors or family members with flu-like or cold symptoms
- Do not lift your child from under the arms for 6-8 weeks. Rather, scoop from their bottom and back
- Young infants may do “tummy time” after 4 weeks

CHILDREN

- No daycare/school until after the first follow-up visit
- May swim in:
 - Private pools: 2 weeks
 - Public pool/lake/ocean: 4 weeks
- No gym class, playground, skiing or bike riding for 6 weeks
- No lifting items greater than 10 pounds for 6 weeks

- Do not lift your child using his/her underarms for 6-8 weeks. Rather scoop from their bottom and back

YOUNG ADULTS

- No school or work until after the first follow-up visit
- No driving for 6 weeks
- No gym class or competitive sports for a minimum of 6 weeks, you will need permission from your cardiologist prior to returning to competitive sports
- No lifting items greater than 20 pounds, including backpacks, for 6 weeks

WOUND CARE

- Gently clean the incision daily with soap and water
- Dry the incision well by patting with a clean soft towel
- Tub baths and showers may be taken five days after surgery. Submerging the wound in a bathtub or hot-tub should not be done until the scab is off of the wound and there are no open areas.
- No ointments or other home remedies should be applied to the incision until the scab is off of the wound.
- If your child goes home with “stitches,” they will be removed by Dr. Quinn at the first visit. Do not cut or trim “stitches” at home. A protruding stitch, especially at the top of the wound is not abnormal and should be left alone.

Please notify the office if there is excessive redness, swelling, drainage or tenderness at the surgical site

IMMUNIZATIONS

Please wait until after your first post-surgery visit before resuming your immunization schedule. Live vaccines (including MMR and Varicella) should be delayed for 6 weeks after surgery. Some patients will require a vaccine called Synagis to protect them from RSV during the winter months. Your cardiologist will discuss whether or not your child will need this vaccine.

DENTAL CARE AND PROCEDURES

- No dental cleanings or scheduled surgeries for 3 months after heart surgery
- Between 3 and 6 months after surgery, antibiotics should be taken before dental procedures and before scheduled or emergency procedures
- Antibiotics are used to prevent an infection called bacterial endocarditis.

This is referred to as SBE prophylaxis

Please ask your cardiologist about The American Heart Association guidelines for SBE prophylaxis

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

- Congenital Heart (formerly PCA)
 - 207-883-5532
- Pediatric Cardiac Surgery (Dr. Quinn)
 - 207-773-8161

FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS

Congenital Heart

71 US Route 1, Suite C, Scarborough, ME 04074

Pediatric Cardiac Surgery

818 Congress Street, Portland, ME 04102
