

## The Value of Early Walking After Surgery

Early walking after surgery is one of the most crucial things you can do to prevent problems. Your doctor will talk with you about what is best for you.

### Starting to Walk After Surgery

While in bed, leg pumps will be applied to help promote blood flow in your legs. When it is time to get out of bed, your nurse will help you:

- Dangle at the bedside.
- Move from the bed to a chair.
- Walk in the hallways.

You may feel dizzy or faint when first getting up, so you must go slowly. This means sitting up slowly and sitting at the side of the bed for a few minutes.

Please let the nursing staff know if you feel faint, dizzy, nauseous or are short of breath while walking.

### Why You Should Walk

Walking promotes the flow of oxygen throughout your body and maintains normal breathing function. It also strengthens your muscle tone. Gastrointestinal and urinary tract function are improved by walking. These body systems are slowed down after surgery. Walking also improves blood flow and speeds wound healing.

Failure to walk may cause increased constipation and gas pain and weakness, and puts you at a higher risk for infections, blood clots and lung problems such as pneumonia. Prolonged bed rest may also increase the risk for skin breakdown and pressure sores.

If you have any further questions, ask your nurse or doctor.