

DO'S & DON'TS

AFTER A HEART SURGERY

Surgery to repair a Congenital Heart Disease (CHD) can be stressful for you and your child. They may experience a low fever which usually goes away in 1 or 2 days. Your child may also be more lethargic than usual for several weeks and their activities has to be limited for 6 weeks. Depending on the type of CHD, it may take your child longer to fully recover. This care sheet will give you a general idea on what you should and should not do after a surgery.

DO:



Lift baby by supporting the chest with one hand and supporting the lower body and buttock with other hand.



Keep stitches clean and dry



Monitor your child for pain



Give your child their prescribed medication accordingly



Protect your child from infection during this recuperating period



Keep your child in loose fitting clothes to prevent rubbing on stitches



Keep child away from large crowds to help prevent infection



Let your child rest when they feel tired



Support your child when they are walking by holding their waist

DO NOT:



Lift the child up by grabbing under the arms. Lifting stretches the chest and can cause pain



Get stitches wet when they are not completely dry



Allow your child to lift heavy objects up to 6 – 8 weeks after surgery



Send baby to daycare until they have clearance from the doctor for the first 2 weeks



Apply lotion, ointments or creams to the incision



Place boppy pillow or towel roll under child's chest



Do strenuous activities like running, swimming or gym



Let your child climb or jump off steps, curbs or furniture



Walk your child holding their hands above their head

Call your child's doctor when your child experiences:

- Increased pain, redness, draining or swelling
- Seizure
- Drinking less fluid
- Trouble breathing
- Fever
- Chest pain
- Prolonged nausea
- Irregular heartbeat
- Increased tiredness
- Poor appetite
- Cough that won't go away
- Child is not getting any better

