



Information for You from Your Health Care Team

After Your Pectus Bar Placement

What about my child's activities?

- No twisting for 4 weeks. Bend at the hips.
- No slouching or slumping when sitting.
- No swimming for 5 days then swimming allowed in a chlorinated pool.
- No gym, sports tiring activities, or heavy lifting (over 5-10 pounds) for 12 weeks after surgery.
- Sleep on back for 2 weeks after surgery
- Have a set of school books at home and school to avoid heavy lifting. Your child may return to school in 2-3 weeks.
- Quiet supervised reading and playing board or video games are good activities.
- Your child may slowly increase physical activity. Your child may be out of bed, dressed and moving each day. Walking is a good form of exercise to help build strength.
- It is normal to be tired after discharge. It is important for your child to take deep breaths and to walk to expand the lungs. Deep breathing exercises should be performed twice a day.

Adult patients may not drive while taking pain medicine or if they cannot freely move because they are uncomfortable.

When can I shower?

- You may shower after the dressing is removed. The steri strips may get wet. Pat the site dry after showering.

How should I care for my child's incision?

- A clear plastic dressing (tegaderm) that covers white gauze can be removed in 3 days.
- The gauze covers small white bandages (steri strips) that will fall off in 7-10 days.
- The stitches that hold the incision together do not need to be removed. The body will absorb them.

What medicine should I give my child for pain?

- Tylenol® with Codeine: every 4 hours as needed for discomfort.

Do not give the child any narcotic medicines containing Tylenol at the same time as regular Tylenol. Narcotic medicines that have Tylenol include: Lortab and Vicodin

- Some children experience more pain in the morning as they become active or at night
- It may be more comfortable to sleep in a semi-upright position.

What should my child eat?

- Regular diet.
- If vomiting occurs, do not give your child anything to eat or drink for 1-2 hours. Then offer small amounts of clear liquids until your child does not vomit anymore. Then slowly start on their normal diet.

If vomiting continues please call our office.

When do I bring my child back to the doctor?

- Your child should be seen in 7-14 days after surgery.
- An appointment should have already been made for you and is noted on the papers you received from our office. If it has not been made please call 315-464-2878 during office hours for an appointment

When should I call the doctor?

- Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, chest pain with deep breath
- Temperature greater than 101°
- Redness, swelling, or drainage at the incision site
- Extreme irritability not controlled with pain medication
- Disinterest in eating or drinking (after the first 24 hours)
- Injury to chest which may cause bar to move
- Continued cough

Other information

The implant may remain in place for a minimum of 3 years. If emergency medical attention during this period is needed we recommend the following:

- We suggest your child wear a Medic Alert bracelet. You can order this through most pharmacies or at www.Medicalert.org. The bracelet inscription should read **surgical steel bar in place under sternum**
- An MRI of the chest or abdomen may be done. Your child may feel some warmth or discomfort at the site of the pectus bar during the test.
- Cardiac defibrillation should be done with anterior posterior paddle placements to deliver electrical charge to the heart.
- Your child should travel with written records that say a surgical steel bar has been placed.
- It is possible the patient may activate a metal alarm system or hand held wand used in airports.

Speak Up if You Have Any Questions

**Division of Pediatric Surgery
315-464-2878**

Revised 3/2009