

POST-OPERATIVE DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS



Patient Name:

Date Received:

THORASCOPIC (VATS) LOBECTOMY/WEDGE RESECTION

EXPECTED DATE OF DISCHARGE

- Usual Length of Stay: 1-2 days (Wedge) and 2-4 days (Lobectomy).
- Be prepared to be discharged home by 10:00 am.

NUTRITION

- **No restrictions.** Follow Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating for a balanced diet.
- Avoid constipation by eating foods high in fibre (whole grain breads and cereals, fresh vegetables and fruit) and drinking plenty of fluids.

ACTIVITY

- You may feel short of breath for the first few weeks. Stop activities when you are tired and take frequent rest periods during the day.
- Gradually increase your activity level daily over the next 4 – 6 weeks. **Do not smoke.**
- No heavy lifting (greater than 10 lbs), vacuuming, driving, shoveling snow or yard work for 4 – 6 weeks.
- Consult your surgeon prior to operating a motor vehicle.
- It is unsafe to fly in an airplane for 2 months following your surgery. Ask your surgeon for clearance prior to air-travel.
- Start walking to improve circulation and strength and gradually increase the distance.
- Follow any specific exercise program that you have been given by the physiotherapist.

PAIN MEDICATION

- You will be given a prescription for pain medication. Take as directed. Do not wait for the pain to become severe before taking them.
- You should take pain medication before activity to improve your comfort. Read all instructions before taking your medications.

HYGIENE

- Avoid tub baths until your incisions are fully healed.
- You may shower once you are home. Avoid a forceful shower spray over the incision sites. Pat dry with a clean towel.

DRESSINGS

- All incisions are closed with dissolvable sutures, except for the chest tube suture.
- There are two layers of bandages: an outer layer (Opsite) and an inner layer (Steri-strips).
- The outer layer can be removed once you arrive home. The inner layer may be removed in 5-7 days, if they haven't fallen off already.
- Remove dressing from chest tube site 48 hours after discharge. See your family doctor to remove the chest tube suture one week after discharge (if there is one there).

FOLLOW UP

- You must call your surgeon's office in order to make an appointment in 2-3 weeks.

CONTACT YOUR DOCTOR OR GO TO THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT IF YOU HAVE:



1. Fever over 38.3C or 101F
2. Severe pain not relieved by medication
3. Increased redness, swelling, drainage or bleeding around incision sites
4. Sudden, severe shortness of breath
5. Sudden, sharp chest pain