

## Getting out of a chair

1. Move yourself to the edge of the chair by:
  - Leaning back and pushing against the back of the chair to slide your body forward.
  - Sitting upright and shifting your weight from side-to-side, bringing the opposite hip forward with each weight shift.
2. Place your feet flat on the floor and below your knees.
3. Place your hands beside your legs on the seat of the chair. Don't use the armrests. This would be out of "the tube".
4. Push on the seat using the same force with both hands. Keep your hands beside your legs.
5. Use your legs to stand up. A rocking-like motion can help.

If you use a walker, reach for the handles after you stand up.

## Bathing and dressing

It's okay to:

- Reach behind your head and body for dressing, bathing, going to the bathroom, and washing your hair
- Bend over to put on your socks and shoes, but it might help to bring your foot up to the opposite knee.

## Sleep positions

If you sleep on your back, put pillows under your head and upper back. This will take some pressure off your chest and breastbone.

If you sleep on your side, put a pillow between your knees to support your back. Also, put a pillow in front of you so you don't roll forward.

It's best not to sleep on your stomach right after surgery. Sleeping on your stomach can put pressure on your chest and breastbone, which can cause pain. If you want to sleep in this position, see if it hurts and let pain be your guide.

Always keep your move in "the tube" as you change positions (especially when you move onto your stomach) and when you get up.

You might feel more comfortable sleeping in a recliner chair. If you do, put 1 or 2 pillows under your knees to take some of the pressure off your low back. You can also put a pillow under each of your arms to help take pressure off your chest and breastbone.

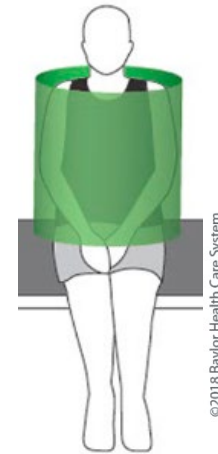
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This information does not replace the advice given to you by your health care provider.

Catalogue #266804 (March 2021)  
To order: [patienteduc@fraserhealth.ca](mailto:patienteduc@fraserhealth.ca)

## Keep Your Move in the Tube™



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How to move safely  
and protect your breastbone  
after chest surgery.

Let pain be your guide.

Have a family member or friend  
help you to move and do things.

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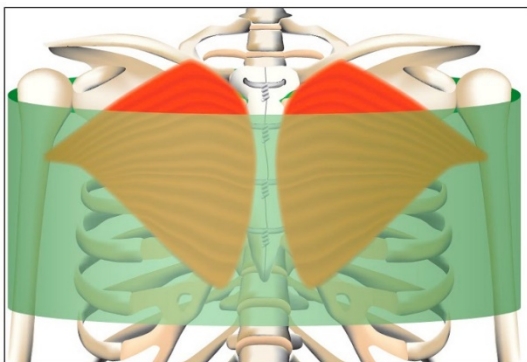
**Keep Your Move in the Tube™** is a way to move that helps you protect your breastbone (sternum) while it heals.

It helps you move safely as you build up strength and recover from chest surgery.

All you need to do is imagine that your upper body is inside a big tube and guides how you move.

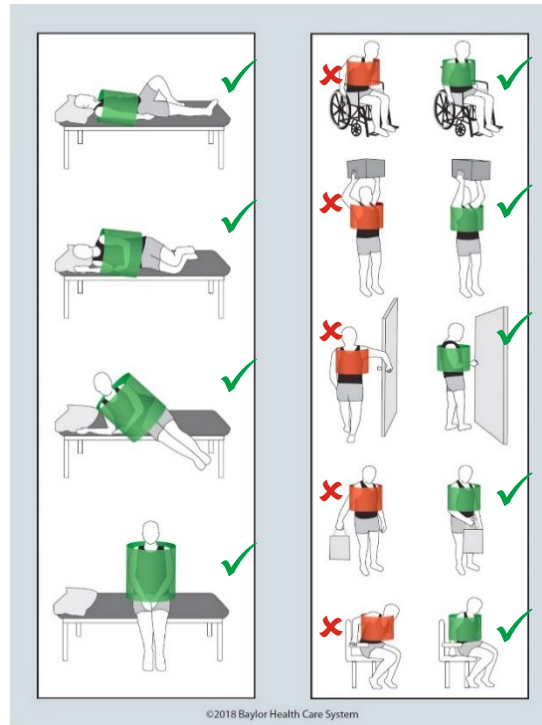
You'll know when it is safe to move more by paying attention to how you feel and how much pain you have.

It is normal to feel a 'clicking' sound when you move in certain ways.



This picture shows the imaginary tube (in green) around your upper body. See how the upper arms are tucked in close to the sides of the body.

This keeps your chest muscles (in red) from pulling on your breastbone.



This picture shows you how to keep different moves in the tube.

The images with the green tube and check mark (✓) are safe ways to move. These ways put less stress on your breastbone.

The key is to keep your elbows tucked into your sides while lifting, pushing, pulling, or raising your arms above your head.

The images with the red tube and 'x' are moves that put more stress on your breastbone. Try not to move in these ways until you have little or no pain or discomfort.

As you heal and have less pain, you can slowly start to move outside the tube.

## Getting out of bed

1. Bend your knees and place your feet flat on the bed.
2. Place your hands on the bed beside your body.
3. Push into the bed with your feet, hands, upper back, and head to lift or scoot your body toward the bed edge.
4. Reach across your body towards the edge of the bed with one hand and roll on your side. Keep your upper arms close to your body.
5. Push up with the bony part of your elbow and the palm of your hand.
6. As you sit up, keep your arms close to your body (in "the tube").

**Don't** push or move to a sitting position with your arms behind your body or outside "the tube."

## Sitting in a chair

Before you sit, make sure that the back of your legs touch the edge of the chair.

1. Bend your knees and slowly lower your body.
2. Use your hands to reach for the seat of the chair.
3. Use your legs to help you sit down.