

Bone Spur Repair: What to Expect at Home

Your Recovery

A bone spur repair is surgery to remove a bone spur, a bony growth that forms on normal bone. Your doctor made one or more small cuts called incisions near the bone spur. Then the doctor used small tools to remove the piece of bone. Your surgery may have been done using a few small incisions and a lighted viewing tube called an arthroscope (arthroscopic surgery). Or the doctor may have made one larger incision (open surgery).

You may feel tired for several days after bone spur surgery. The surgery area may be swollen. And you may notice that your skin is a different color near the incisions. This is normal and will start to go away in a few days.

Your recovery will depend on where the bone spur was and the type of surgery you had. It may take several days to a few weeks for you to feel better. You may have to limit your activity until your strength and movement are back to normal.

This care sheet gives you a general idea about how long it will take for you to recover. But each person recovers at a different pace. Follow the steps below to get better as quickly as possible.

How can you care for yourself at home?



Activity

- Rest when you feel tired. Getting enough sleep will help you recover.
- Stay active. Talk to your doctor about what you can do and about any limits on your normal routine.
- Depending where on your body you had your bone spur surgery, you may need to use a sling, a brace, or crutches. Follow your doctor's directions for using them.
- The amount of time off you will need depends on the area and extent of your surgery and the type of work you do. If you have a desk job, you may be able to return to work or your normal routine in a few days. If you lift heavy objects, or do other labor, it may be several weeks or longer before you can return to work.
- Ask your doctor when you can take a shower. You may wash the incisions with regular soap and water.
- Ask your doctor when you can drive again.



Diet

- You can eat your normal diet. If your stomach is upset, try bland, low-fat foods like plain rice, broiled chicken, toast, and yogurt.

- You may notice that your bowel movements are not regular right after your surgery. This is common. Try to avoid constipation and straining with bowel movements. Take a fiber supplement every day. If you have not had a bowel movement after a couple of days, ask your doctor about taking a mild laxative.



Medicines

- Your doctor will tell you if and when you can restart your medicines. He or she will also give you instructions about taking any new medicines.
- If you take aspirin or some other blood thinner, ask your doctor if and when to start taking it again. Make sure that you understand exactly what your doctor wants you to do.
- Be safe with medicines. Take pain medicines exactly as directed.
 - If the doctor gave you a prescription medicine for pain, take it as prescribed.
 - If you are not taking a prescription pain medicine, ask your doctor if you can take an over-the-counter medicine.
- If you think your pain medicine is making you sick to your stomach:
 - Take your medicine after meals (unless your doctor has told you not to).
 - Ask your doctor for a different pain medicine.
- If your doctor prescribed antibiotics, take them as directed. Do not stop taking them just because you feel better. You need to take the full course of antibiotics.



Incision care

- If you have dressings over the cuts the doctor made (incisions), keep them clean and dry. You may remove them when your doctor tells you to.
- If your incisions are open to the air, keep the area clean and dry.
- If you have strips of tape on the incisions the doctor made, leave the tape on for a week or until it falls off, unless your doctor gave you other instructions.



Ice

- Put ice or a cold pack on your incisions for 10 to 20 minutes at a time. Try to do this every 1 to 2 hours for the next 3 days (when you are awake) or until the swelling goes down. Put a thin cloth between the ice and your skin.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

When should you call for help?



Call 911 anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if:

- You passed out (lost consciousness).
- You have chest pain, are short of breath, or you cough up blood.

Call your doctor now or seek immediate medical care if:

- You have pain that does not get better after you take pain medicine.
- You are sick to your stomach or cannot drink fluids.
- You have loose stitches, or your incision comes open.
- You have signs of a blood clot in your leg (called a deep vein thrombosis), such as:
 - Pain in your calf, back of the knee, thigh, or groin.
 - Redness or swelling in your leg.
- You have signs of infection, such as:
 - Increased pain, swelling, warmth, or redness.
 - Red streaks leading from the incision.
 - Pus draining from the incision.
 - A fever.
- You bleed through your bandage.

Watch closely for any changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if you have any problems.

Where can you learn more?

Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/patiented>

Enter **S791** in the search box to learn more about "**Bone Spur Repair: What to Expect at Home**".

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