



# Healing After Surgery





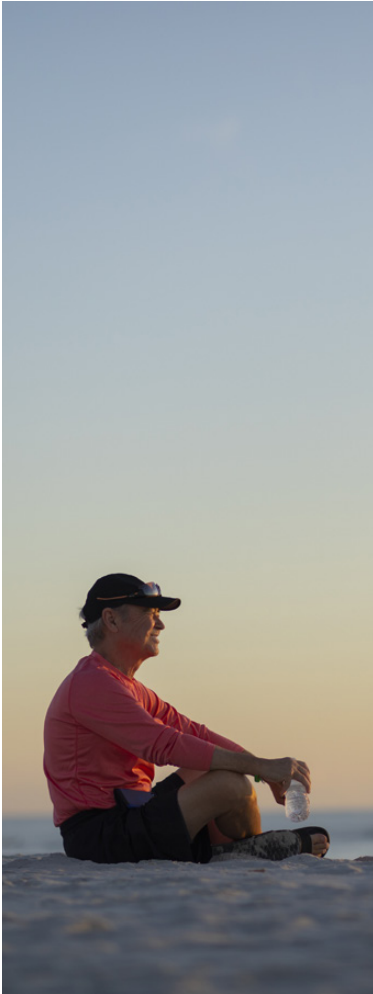
# Pain Management Action Plan



The Healing after Surgery program is here to support and encourage you to have a plan for managing pain after surgery. Managing pain is an important part of healing. You may feel nervous before surgery. Many people feel this way. At Mayo Clinic, we are committed to helping you to recover well after surgery.

Your plan to manage pain will include pain medications and other techniques proven to help you recover after surgery. Mayo Clinic considers combining pain medications with non-medication techniques best practice for managing pain and healing after surgery. Together, they can usually reduce your pain to a tolerable level.

There are many proven pain management techniques that will lessen pain or increase your tolerance for pain. The more familiar you are with these techniques before surgery, the more prepared you will be to use them during your recovery. Do not wait until after your surgery to experiment with these techniques. Have a plan before surgery.



## These pain management techniques

- Promote the healing process.
- May help you recover more quickly and return to normal daily activities.
- Help you play an active role in your own recovery.
- May limit the length of time you need to take pain medications.
- May allow you to feel more calm and relaxed as you recover from surgery.

As you make your pain management plan, think about why learning to manage pain is important to you. The more important something is to you, the more likely you are to try it and stick with it. Write down your own personal reasons to try these techniques.

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## Below is a list of pain management techniques

Use them before surgery, while you recover in the hospital and when you return home.

### **Relaxation**

Breathing

Muscle Relaxation

Meditation

Imagery

Music

Aromatherapy

### **Movement**

Walking

Yoga

Tai Chi

### **Physical**

Acupressure

Massage

Cold or heat

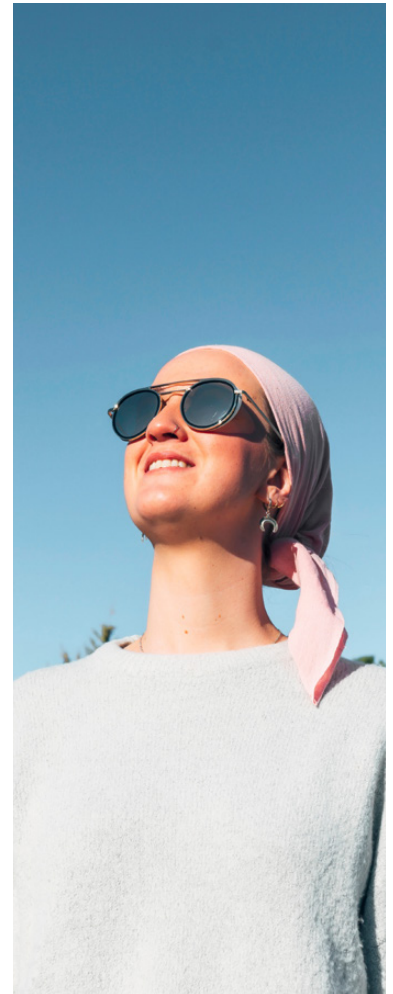
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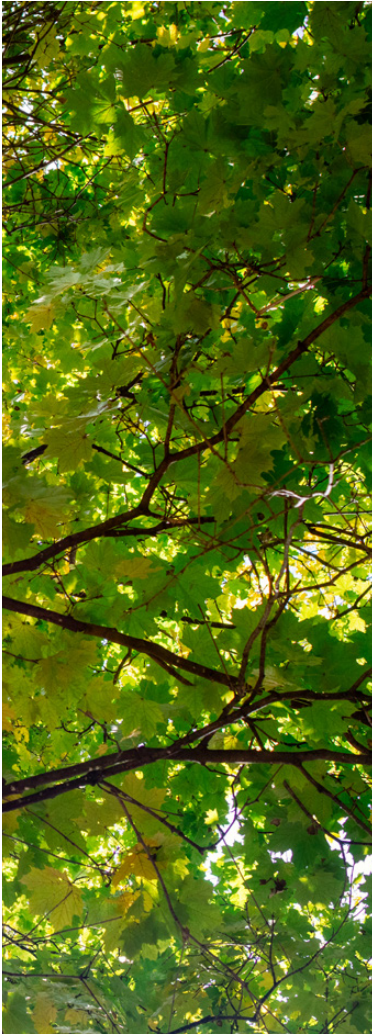
Select three pain management techniques:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_





## Make a Plan

It is important to actively help your body recover from surgery. Being prepared and using the techniques that are most meaningful to you before surgery can lead to better pain management. Having a plan leads to commitment.

### Action plans

Action plans have specific steps to help you reach your goal.

- Keep things simple, you are much more likely to be successful if you start with a few small steps.
- Be specific about your action steps: What, where or when? For example, I will walk to the corner and back Monday, Wednesday and Friday this week.
- How confident are you that you will complete your plan? Using a scale from 1-10, where 1 is not confident and 10 is very confident, you should have a confidence level of 7 or higher. If your confidence level is below 7, you should change your plan to something you feel more confident about.
- Track your progress by using a calendar. This will help you be aware, acknowledge small wins and recognize your progress.
- Share your pain management plan with people in your support network. Invite them to be part of your action plan. They can help you stay committed to your action plan and provide emotional support.
- At the end of the week, share with your support network how you did with your action plan. Make a new plan for the next week. Think about what went well. What were some of the challenges? What might you do differently?
- Be sure to reward yourself. Notice even small improvements along the way! This will help you to stay motivated and confident.

## Example of an Action Plan

I want: to practice muscle relaxation

What, when, how often?

I will intentionally practice muscle relaxation daily for 10 minutes in the late afternoon. I will mark my calendar when I'm successful with following through.

My confidence I can do this:

8

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 | 7 8 9 10

Too hard!

Just right!

My support:

I will check in with \_\_\_\_\_ at the end of the week and share my experience.

Reflect weekly:

Am I remembering to practice? What is going well? What have been my challenges? What might I tweak?

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## Support Network

As you think about your support person, here are some questions to consider: What will be my action steps to reach out to my support person? What is it like to ask for support? How will I communicate what I need?

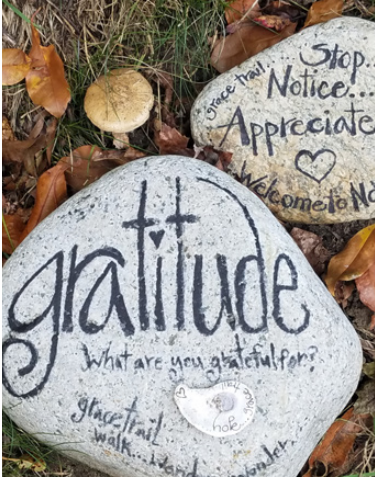
Here are some examples of how your support person may be able to help you:

- Provide emotional and physical support.
- Offer reminders to help stay focused on your self-care during your recovery from surgery.
- Assist with daily needs so that you can focus on your recovery.
- Complete small tasks you want done before you go into surgery. Examples might be creating a music play list or making appointments.

## Become and stay engaged

- Prepare ahead of surgery. The more you learn and practice these pain management techniques before surgery, the more prepared you will be to use them to manage pain during your recovery.
- Be kind to yourself. Healing and recovery takes time and energy. If you have questions or concerns, we are here and ready to support you.
- Keep an open mind about pain management techniques. Do not continue with a technique that is not working for you. For example, if you picked yoga but don't care for it, try another pain management technique that may be a better fit for you. Deciding to try something else is not failing.
- Remember that self-care is important when you return home after surgery. Ask your support network to offer reminders.
- Place your plan and resources where you can see them. This will help with commitment.
- Putting action steps into your calendar or learning your pain management technique in a class can help with motivation. Sign up for an individual instruction session or join a class at a local YMCA, Senior Center or Wellness Center. Ask a friend or family member to go with you.
- Take time to reflect. What is going well? What isn't going well? How might I change my action steps? There is room at the end of this workbook to write your thoughts.
- Be patient with yourself. Learning something new is a process and takes time.





## Healing After Surgery Resources

If you have questions about using the pain management techniques, call a pain management support team member, at: 1- 833-919-1432, Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 5:00 pm (CST). Leave a voicemail if after hours or on the weekend, and you will receive a call back on the next business day. Patient group calls are also available at various times during the week. Instructions for joining these will be sent to your portal and posted on the [healingaftersurgery.com](http://healingaftersurgery.com) website.

Use these calendar pages to plan out your pain management goals and activities.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT

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