

Heart Surgery: When to Call Your Healthcare Team

As you recover from heart surgery you may notice changes in the way you feel and wonder if you should call your healthcare team. This can make you anxious and fearful of every little change your body is going through.

“About a week after I had the procedure, I noticed that I had an accelerated heart rate of about 130 beats per minute. I called-- my wife called the cardiologist who said, “You’re probably-- it’s a good idea to go to the emergency room.”

“It’s really important that you call your doctor and have that conversation with him or her.”

Never be afraid to call your healthcare team, go to the hospital or call 911. They are always there to help.

Contact your healthcare provider if you notice: Weight gain of 2-5 pounds over 2-3 days, or have a temperature over 101 degrees Fahrenheit, and call 911 your emergency response number if you experience pain, tenderness, burning or warmth in your chest which may spread to your jaw, neck or arms, breathing difficulties, or a return of your pre-surgery symptoms.

If you have been prescribed an Anticoagulant medication like Warfarin, follow any specific dietary guidelines and take extra care not to hurt yourself. If you cut yourself, put pressure on the area until the bleeding stops. If it doesn’t stop, call your healthcare provider.

Recovering from heart surgery can be emotionally and physically challenging. But knowing what to be aware of and when to call your Cardiac care team or 911 can help you feel more relaxed and ready to focus on the task at hand – healing.