# HEAL BETTER FEEL BETTER

After Surgery for Patients with Frailty

*Find more tips and tools at*
***www.heal-better.org/frailty***

Before surgery, your care team checks for things that can make recovery harder and gives you tools to help you prepare.

**This guide offers simple steps you can take, starting today, to heal better.**







## *What is frailty?*

**Frailty means it's harder for your body to bounce back from big stresses like surgery.** Healing takes energy and strength, and when your body is running low, recovery is slower and complications are more likely.

**Signs of frailty include:**

- feeling tired most days
- moving slower
- trouble with balance
- losing weight without trying
- needing more help with daily tasks

**The good news: simple steps can help get your body ready.** Moving more, eating protein-rich foods, and lining up support after surgery all make a real difference in how well you heal.

## You can heal better by focusing on 3 things:

### 1 Add movement to your routine

Adding at least

**10-15 minutes each day**

of easy to moderate movement can significantly improve your healing after surgery.

Mix it up with light cardio, strength training, balance and flexibility.

### 2 Eat more protein

Protein is the building block your body uses to repair muscle and heal. Try to eat

**at least 50g of protein per day.**

If you don't have a big appetite, options like protein shakes can help ensure you get enough protein. Drink lots of water to stay hydrated.

### 3 Plan for extra support

It's normal to feel foggy, anxious, or forgetful after surgery.

**Make a plan**

Plan ahead for trusted friends and family members to keep you company and help with things like medications, meals, and appointments while your mind and body recover.

**Set yourself a goal:**
Before my surgery, I will...

# Movement Plan

**At least 10-15 mins of movement per day**

## CARDIO

- [ ] **Walking**
  Find a flat surface where you can safely walk. Start with 10 minute blocks and increase slowly.
- [ ] **Marching in Place**
  Hold onto chair or counter. Alternate lifting knees to comfortable height.
- [ ] **Dancing**
  Standing or seated movement to music.
- [ ] **Aquatic Exercises**
  Do cardio exercises like jumping jacks in a pool to reduce joint strain.
- [ ] **Stationary Cycling**
  Use a stationary bike or NuStep if you have access to one.

## STRENGTH TRAINING

- [ ] **Chair Sit-to-Stand**
  Place a chair near a wall for safety and go from sitting to standing without using your arms if possible.
- [ ] **Wall Push-Up**
  Stand an arm length from wall. Bend your elbows slowly toward wall, then push back.
- [ ] **Use a Resistance Band**
  Use a band to do arm and leg exercises while seated in a chair.
- [ ] **Calf Raises**
  While standing, hold a chair back or counter and raise slowly onto your toes, then lower.
- [ ] **Squeeze a Ball**
  Squeeze a rubber or anti-stress ball in your hand as hard as you can, then relax your hand.

**Other recommendations:**

***Safety First:*** *Before starting any exercise, make sure the area around you is clear. Hold onto a sturdy chair or counter for balance. If you feel dizzy, short of breath, or unsteady at any point, stop and sit down. Talk to your care team about what is recommended based on your individual needs.*

# Social Support Plan

## MY SUPPORTERS

Expect to need more help than usual after surgery.
**Who will help with...**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Regular daily activities:** | |
| **Medications:** | |
| **Getting enough movement:** | |
| **Shopping & household chores:** | |
| **Transportation:** | |

*If you need more support ask your care team about community resources.*

# Protein Grocery List

**At least 50g of protein per day**

- [ ] **Salmon**
  25g protein / 4 oz fillet
- [ ] **Chicken**
  25g protein / 4 oz breast
- [ ] **Cottage Cheese**
  14g protein / .5 cup
- [ ] **Eggs**
  6g protein / 1 egg
- [ ] **Lentils (cooked)**
  18g protein / 1 cup
- [ ] **Greek Yogurt**
  15-20g protein / 1 cup
- [ ] **Nuts and Seeds**
  10g protein /3 tbsp
- [ ] **Edamame**
  17g protein / 1 cup

*Try protein shakes (like Ensure) or supplements if you have a low appetite.*