

Thorocotomy Surgery

Thorocotomy is a procedure that allows the surgeon to directly view a lung, and the surrounding area. Additional procedures may be done, such as removing part or all of a lung if a mass is present. One or more chest tubes are placed in the chest temporarily to drain fluid and air after surgery.

Before the day of surgery:

- Ask your doctor if you need to stop blood-thinning medicines like aspirin or coumadin.

On the day of surgery:

- You will need to arrive 1 ½-2 hours before surgery. A nurse will interview you, start an IV and answer any questions you have.

Diet

- Your diet will be gradually increased as tolerated.

Medications

- Take pain medications as instructed by your physician, to keep your pain under control.
- Resume all medication as taken before the surgery unless otherwise instructed by your physician.

Activities and Restrictions

- Follow your doctor's orders concerning driving, returning to work, exercising, climbing stairs, lifting, and sexual activity.
- It is normal to feel short of breath for several weeks.
- Walking, as tolerated will improve your overall condition.
- You may be taught exercises to improve your breathing and your range of motion while you heal.
- Continue to perform deep breathing and coughing exercises as taught in the hospital.
- Continue to perform range of motion exercises for strengthening the muscles on your surgical side to keep your shoulder moving freely.

Wound Care

- Follow your doctor's instructions concerning when you can shower. When you shower, wash your incision gently with warm water and mild soap. Bruising, itchiness, soreness, and numbness at your incision site are normal for several weeks after surgery.