


# Heart Surgery Pain CareMap

Sources and solutions

Care Milestones

Day of Surgery	ICU After Surgery	On the Unit			At Home
<b>Operating Room</b> <i>Sources and causes of pain:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Surgery <i>Solutions:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> General anesthesia <b>Intensive Care Unit (ICU)</b> <i>Sources and causes of pain:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Incisions <input type="checkbox"/> Chest tubes <i>Solutions:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Intravenous (IV) fentanyl or morphine 	<i>Sources and causes of pain:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Incisions <input type="checkbox"/> Chest tubes <i>Solutions:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> After tubes removed, start taking pain pills by mouth, with pain medicine by IV for breakthrough pain <input type="checkbox"/> Tylenol, prescription pain medicines <input type="checkbox"/> Relaxation, stress reduction, massage, favorite foods, music, prayer <i>Notes:</i> It is normal to have some pain after heart surgery, even when taking pain medicine as instructed. Your pain will remind you to follow your precautions.	<i>Sources and causes of pain:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Incisions <input type="checkbox"/> Chest tubes <i>Solutions:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Tylenol as needed (PRN) <input type="checkbox"/> Aim for consistent pain control	<i>Sources and causes of pain:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Incisions <input type="checkbox"/> Chest tubes <input type="checkbox"/> Chest tube removal <i>Solutions:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Ask your nurse for pain medicine 30 to 60 minutes before chest tube removal	<i>Notes:</i> After your chest tubes are removed, your pain should decrease. You will most likely need a lower dose of prescription pain medicine, and need to take it less often.	<i>Pain Control:</i> Your care team will prescribe pain medicine for you to take at home. Keep taking the non-prescription (over-the-counter) pain medicine (Tylenol). Keep using cold packs and heat to control pain and swelling. <i>Dose Tapering:</i> Plan to decrease ( <i>taper</i> ) your prescription pain medicine. You can either wait longer between doses (for example, wait 5 hours between doses instead of 4 hours) OR lower the dose (for example, take 5 mg instead of 10 mg). If your pain is well controlled with one of these options, add the other option 1 to 2 days later. After about 2 weeks of tapering, you should no longer need prescription pain medicine. If you are having more pain, or it is not easing after 2 weeks, call the Cardiac Surgery Clinic and ask for help.
		<i>Notes:</i> <input type="checkbox"/> It is essential that you clearly tell your nurses about your pain levels! Be sure to tell them: - Where it hurts - What makes it better or worse - How often you've been taking your pain medicines - What your goals are for the day <input type="checkbox"/> It is normal to have brief spikes in pain when you cough, move, and do other activities. <input type="checkbox"/> Anxiety can make your pain worse. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Women:</i> We may recommend a surgical bra to protect your incisions	<b>Functional Goals</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Move to sit in chair <input type="checkbox"/> Coughing, deep breathing, breathing exercises <input type="checkbox"/> Sleep – being able to sleep means your pain medicine is working <input type="checkbox"/> Follow activity precautions	<b>Functional Goals</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Continue same goals as before <input type="checkbox"/> Walk in the hallway with a walker and help from hospital staff 