

Abdominal & core

recovery + movement
programme



me+ recovery

Helping you to recover, one step at a time

GREEN PHASE ONE: Foundation

Safe Moving



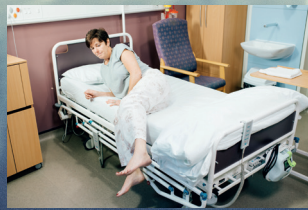
Watch our video at
www.convatec.co.uk/meplus
on how to get in and out of
bed safely.



Sit on the side of your bed and slowly lower yourself down sideways using your arm for support.



Then slowly bring your legs up to the bed one by one.



Lower yourself down so you're lying on your side, then roll over onto your back.



YOUR RECOVERY

These movements are appropriate for anyone who has just had major abdominal surgery.

They form a very important part of your early recovery after stoma surgery and everyone is advised to do them.

Do them very gently and listen to your body carefully. If you experience pain or an unexpected response then stop the movement and speak to your nurse or surgeon.

If your wounds have not healed properly or you have an infection, then please do not commence this programme and speak to your surgeon or nurse about when you should start.

There are a number of movements in this programme; some of which you can do lying in bed (or on the floor at home), others are done

sitting in your chair or standing up.

Make sure you're safe and not at risk of falling when you do the movements and that your chair or bed is secure.

SAFE MOVING

After abdominal surgery it's very important to get in and out of bed in a safe way to avoid straining your abdominal area. Try to avoid 'sitting up' using your abdomen. Instead roll onto your side and push up sideways to a sitting position. To lie back down, lower yourself onto your side and then roll onto your back.

If you're getting up from and down onto the floor, try a similar technique and use a chair for support.

WATCH THE INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEOS FOR THESE MOVES AT www.convatec.co.uk/meplus

Your core muscles are very important, they support your spine and internal organs and are involved in every movement that you do.

Your 'core' is made up of abdominal muscles, but also muscles in your back and pelvic floor. Think of your 'core' as your inbuilt support.

During abdominal surgery your muscles become weak and damaged, so it's very important to begin to gently strengthen them as soon as you can after surgery. This will help your recovery, posture and confidence as well as reducing your risk of developing complications due to inactivity.

PLEASE NOTE: This programme has been developed in conjunction with nurses, physiotherapists, surgeons and stoma patients. All the movements are appropriate for someone who has had major abdominal surgery. If you have any questions about any of the movements, please speak to your nurse, surgeon, GP or physiotherapist. Always listen to your body and proceed with care. If you have any pain, discomfort or an unusual or unexpected response when doing the movements then please stop and seek medical advice.

Abdominal & core recovery programme

Foundation

WHAT ARE THE AIMS?

- To enhance your recovery and get you back to your daily activities as soon as possible
- To rebuild your confidence and improve your general wellbeing after abdominal surgery
- To help restore your mobility, co-ordination and balance
- To engage and strengthen your tummy muscles after abdominal surgery

HOW DOES IT WORK?

- With the approval of your surgeon, you can start these recovery movements as soon as 1-3 days after your operation, or as soon as you feel ready
- Everyone should start with this green phase (even if your surgery was years ago) and complete it before moving onto the blue phase. It's important to take your time and not rush through it
- If you can, follow this programme BEFORE surgery. It will help you to recover faster afterwards
- This programme is a menu. You don't have to do ALL the movements. Pick and choose the ones that feel right for you
- These movements can be done on your bed or on the floor



It is imperative that you check with your nurse, physiotherapist or surgeon before commencing this programme. Show them this booklet and ask them to support you through it.

1 Core Connect



- **Lie on your back** with your knees bent and feet flat.
- **Gently place your hands** on your lower tummy.
- **Take a breath in** Then slowly breathe out through your mouth. As you breathe out, tighten up your internal abdominal muscles including your pelvic floor.
- **Focus on the feeling** of pulling your tummy away from your hands. Imagine trying to pull your hip bones together as if you're closing a book.
- **You're aiming** to get a deep contraction of the muscle. Nothing should visibly move on the outside of your body. It is very subtle and gentle.
- **Hold this** gentle contraction for a slow count of 3-5 whilst continuing to breathe normally.
- **Then relax** and breathe away.
- **Repeat x 5**
- **Do this 2-3 times per day**

2 Pelvic Tilt



- **Lie on your back** with your knees bent.
- **Relax** with a slight curve in your lower back – this is the neutral position.
- **Breathe out** and gently flatten your lower back into the bed/floor - rocking your pelvis backwards, taking the curve out of your back. Imagine trying to squash a pea under your low back.
- **At the same time** gently contract your deep abdominal muscles and your pelvic floor.
- **Try not to push** on your legs, just tilt the pelvis. You're simply taking the curve out of your lower back.
- **Hold this** position for a moment.
- **Then release** back to the neutral position and relax.
- **Repeat x 5**
- **Do this 2-3 times per day**
- **As you get stronger, you'll be able to hold a stronger contraction and tilt/hold for a little longer.**

3 Knee Rolls



- **Lie on your back** with your knees bent and feet together.
- **Relax** and breathe normally.
- **Then gently** tighten your deep tummy muscles as previously.
- **Allow your knees** to roll over to one side, keeping your shoulders flat on the floor. Keep your knees and ankles stacked together.
- **Only go over as far as is comfortable**, then come back to centre and allow your knees to drop over to the opposite side.
- **This is a gentle rolling side-to-side action**, moving gently with control from one side to the other. You should feel your tummy muscles working gently as you roll your knees back up.
- **Consciously breathe out** as you bring your knees back to the centre and use your abdominal muscles to assist the movement.
- **Repeat x 10**
- **Do this 2-3 times per day**

4 Seated Arm Raises



- **Sit on the side** of your bed or on your chair, making sure you're secure and safe with your feet firmly on the floor.
- **Relax and breathe** and have your hands by your sides.
- **Focus on contracting** your deep abdominal muscles and pelvic floor. Maintain this strong contraction throughout.
- **Sit nice and tall** with good posture and imagine a balloon on the top of your head.
- **With a straight arm.** Slowly raise one arm out in front of you. Go as high as you feel able. Keep your shoulder down and relaxed. If you can, take your arm above your head.
- **Swap to the other side and repeat.** Alternate arms, maintaining control of your deep abdominal muscles throughout.
- **Continue to breathe** throughout and keep your tummy muscles engaged.
- **Repeat x 10 in total**
- **Do this 2-3 times per day**

5 Seated Knee Lifts



- **Sit on the side of your bed** or on your chair, making sure you're secure and safe with your feet firmly on the floor.
- **Sit towards** the front of the chair so your back is not supported. This makes the movement more effective.
- **Relax and breathe** and place both hands on your knees.
- **Sit nice and tall with good posture** – imagine a balloon lifting you up from the crown of your head.
- **Focus on contracting** your deep abdominal muscles and pelvic floor. Maintain this strong contraction throughout.
- **Slowly lift one foot** off the floor to challenge your abdominal control. Only a tiny lift. Imagine sliding a letter under your foot. The focus is on maintaining the abdominal contraction.
- **Replace your foot on the floor** and repeat on the other side – maintain control of your trunk and don't allow any movement from side to side of your upper body.
- **Continue to breathe** normally throughout
- **Repeat x 10 in total**
- **Do this 2-3 times per day**

6 Standing Rocking



- **Stand with your feet together**, as tall as you can and engage and contract your deep abdominal muscles and pelvic floor.
- **Step forward** with one foot so that your heel is in line with the toes on your opposite foot.
- **Balance your weight** between both feet.
- **Keep your abdominal** muscles engaged throughout.
- **Slowly rock** forwards and backwards – transferring your weight from foot to foot.
- **Allow your heel** to lift as you rock forwards and the toe of the other foot to lift as you rock backwards.
- **This is a very gentle** balance and core engagement movement.
- **Aim to do 10 rocking movements with good control.**
- **Swap your feet over and do 10 on the opposite side.**
- **Do this 2-3 times per day**

7 Supported Sit to Stand



- **Sit close to the front of your chair** or on the side of your bed with your feet firmly on the floor, feet should be shoulder distance apart or in an 'offset' position with one in front of the other.
- **Have something to support** you such as the arms of the chair or another support close by.
- **Try to use your legs** as much as you can in this movement.
- **First, gently tighten** your deep tummy muscles as previously.
- **Take a deep breath in**, then as you breathe out, push yourself up to a standing position. Using the power of the breath to help you. Use your support as needed, but try not to rely on it. Avoid pushing down hard on the arms of the chair and don't hold your breath.
- **When standing**, stand tall - pause and take a breath.
- **Then slowly** (with control) lower yourself back down to sitting – try to use the muscles in your legs – try to avoid flopping back down without control.
- **Take a breath**, and repeat.
- **Repeat x 5-10**
- **Do this 2-3 times per day**

me+™ recovery is a three stage programme to help your recovery. Sign up to me+™ today and request Phase Three to continue your journey. In addition you will receive a host of lifestyle advice and support when you need it most.

me+™ is a dedicated **FREE** support programme designed specifically for people living with a stoma. Whether you are just about to have surgery or have had your stoma for many years there is help and advice at hand to support you wherever you are on your journey.

MEMBER BENEFITS

Your support team

- Specialist stoma nurse help-line
- Experienced counsellors
- An expert team of product specialists and advisors

Support for daily living

- Free Radar Key and Can't Wait Card
- me+™ Recovery activity and movement programme
- me+™ Community – hear from others living with a stoma
- A whole host of lifestyle advice and support delivered on-line and in booklets you can keep to hand.

JOIN TODAY!

It only takes a few minutes, enrol by calling the me+™ member help-line on:

UK Mainland
0800 467 866

ROI
1800 721 721

Or enrol on-line at:

UK Mainland
www.meplus.convatec.co.uk

ROI
www.meplus.convatec.ie

Further Support



We are Colostomy UK. Here if you have questions, need support or just want to talk to someone who lives with a stoma.

info@ColostomyUK.org • Tel: 0118 939 1537
24/7 Helpline: 0800 328 4257 • www.ColostomyUK.org



The ileostomy & internal pouch
Support Group
Listen • Inform • Support

Living with an ileostomy or caring for someone who is? Got a question or looking for support? Give IA (ileostomy & internal pouch Support Group) a call today.

info@iasupport.org
Tel: 0800 0184 724 • www.iasupport.org



The Urostomy Association provides information and support to people with urostomy, their family and carers.

info@urostomyassociation.org.uk
Tel: 01386 430140 • www.urostomyassociation.org.uk

Reach out whenever you need insights, ideas or just someone to listen.

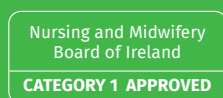
For more information visit **UK: www.meplus.convatec.co.uk ROI: www.meplus.convatec.ie**

Or call: **UK: 0800 467 866 ROI: 1800 721 721**

Freephone Nurse Advisor Line **UK: 0800 085 2516 ROI: 1800 818988**

Our friendly Stoma Care Nurse Advisor is just a phone call away

RCN Accreditation and Bord of Altranais



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