WHILE IN THE HOSPITAL

POSTOPERATIVE CARE
Work with your surgeon and other healthcare professionals as a team. Make sure that you are included in decisions about your care. Ask a family member or friend to be present and to be your advocate. While you are in the Hospital after surgery, your vascular surgery team will ensure that every step is taken to help prevent infection.

PAIN CONTROL
Pain relief is an important part of your care after surgery. Effective treatment of pain will allow for you to recover sooner. After your anesthesia wears off, tell your nurse as soon as you feel pain or discomfort. It is important to ask for pain medication as soon as the pain begins. If you experience pain while getting out of bed or while walking, request pain medications before you do these activities.

To help better understand the degree of pain, you will be asked to rate your pain on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 indicating that you have no pain and 10 indicating you are in extreme pain.

PREVENTING INFECTIONS
Please ask family members and friends who are sick, have colds, or feel ill, not to visit while you are in the hospital.

The most important task to prevent infections is HAND WASHING. Please make sure that all doctors, nurses, and visitors wash their hands immediately after entering and before leaving your room.

PREVENTING BLOOD CLOTS
If you are having surgery or will be hospitalized for a period of time, it is important to ensure proper prevention and treatment for blood clots. You will be given medications that will thin your blood in order to prevent clotting while you are immobilized after surgery. If you are not a candidate for blood thinners, you will have compression boots on your legs to squeeze blood in your legs and help prevent clots. It is important that you wear these at all times while you are not walking. It is important to get out of bed on the first post-operative day if you are in stable condition. Ask the nursing staff for assistance with walking.

PREVENTING PNEUMONIA
During any hospitalization, you are at risk for developing pneumonia. You can help prevent pneumonia by doing certain breathing exercises. Your doctor or nurse will provide you with a device called an incentive spirometer. This is an inexpensive, portable, hand-held device that measures how hard and quickly you can blow air into and out of your lungs. A member of your healthcare team will instruct you on how to use the device. It is important that you do this 10 times per hour while you are in the Hospital, and continue using it at home after discharge until you have fully recovered.