



## SPINE & NEUROSURGERY ASSOCIATES

A Medical Corporation

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### Discharge Instructions after Spine Surgery

(Cervical, lumbar, thoracic discectomy with or without fusion and/or instrumentation)

1. If you were given a back brace/ cervical collar to wear, it must be worn at all times when out of bed unless instructed otherwise. The brace/collar does not need to be worn while sleeping. You may take showers **WITHOUT** the brace being cautious not to bend or twist.
2. Burning, itching, numbness, and some swelling along the incision are common and will gradually go away as healing occurs (it takes about 6 weeks for healing to be complete). The site where bone graft was taken may hurt more. It is common to get occasional twinges in your legs/arms, particularly at night while sleeping. These are of no significance and should clear eventually. If you had numbness or weakness prior to surgery, this may take months to recover.
3. Do as much walking as you can tolerate (Add one mile per week if possible, increasing up to five miles per day as pain and fatigue permit). As your activities are increased, it is common to have some pain as the scar and muscles in the back/neck are stretched and exercised. Increasing discomfort with increased activities are NOT indications that you are causing further injury to the area; however, specific back/neck exercises should be avoided until instructed to do so.
4. Take your medications as prescribed and allow **3 DAYS** for renewal before running out.
5. Keep wound clean and dry for **4 DAYS** after surgery. You may shower on the Fifth day (avoid baths or hot tubs for six weeks). Do not shower if you have oozing from the incision. Excessive oozing causing a soaked dressing needs to be brought to our attention, otherwise change the dressing if it is stained. If Dermabond glue dressing is used, you may shower the second day after surgery.
6. No sitting for prolonged periods of time. You may sit for meals. You can do some things around the house, including house hold duties at waist level; however, **AVOID** activities that include **BENDING, TWISTING, or LIFTING ANYTHING GREATER THAN 10 – 20 LBS or any** activity that causes a lot of pain.
7. You may climb up and down stairs while using a handrail and taking one step at a time leading with your stronger leg.
8. You should assume the passive position during intercourse.
9. Try to avoid sleeping during the day as you will have more difficulty getting a good night sleep; however, avoid overdoing it and get plenty of rest.
10. Try not to gain weight and eat a balanced diet. Drink plenty of water.
11. **DO NOT DRIVE OR OPERATE HEAVY MACHINERY WHILE TAKING NARCOTIC MEDICATION.**
12. Contact our office if you develop signs of possible infection such as Fever, excessive drainage from wound, or increased tenderness or redness around wound.
13. Call our office at 916/771-3300 for a follow up appointment and feel free to call if any questions.