



Discharge Instructions – Lumbar Fusion

Incision

Please have someone check your incisions daily. If any of the following should occur, please call the office:

- Drainage from incision site
- Opening of incisions
- Fevers greater than 101 degrees
- Flu-like symptoms
- Increased redness and/or tenderness

If you have staples or sutures instead of tape on your incision, they may be removed 10-14 days following your surgery. This may be done by a visiting nurse, rehab physician, or at your first follow up visit at our office. Otherwise, if your wound is covered with tape strips, they will typically fall off with showering.

Brace

- If a brace is prescribed, wear it at all times unless except for sleeping and showering.
- Always wear a t-shirt under your brace so that it is not directly in contact with your bare skin.
- The brace may cause you to sweat and you may feel warm. This can irritate your skin so pay special attention to the "Incision" instructions above.

Showering

If your surgeon allows, you may shower as normal once the large, bulky bandages are removed from your incisions. If they are not removed before your discharge from the hospital, you may remove them 36-48 hours after your surgery. Hair washing is permissible while in the shower. No tub baths, hot tubs or whirlpools until seen in the office. You may remove your brace for showering.

Exercise

- Lift only objects weighing less than 10-15 lbs.
- Do not bend or twist at the waist. Always bend with your knees!
- Limit your sitting to 20-30 minute intervals. You should lie down or walk in between sitting periods. There are no limitations for sitting in a recliner chair.
- Walk as much as possible and let discomfort be your guide. You may also go up and down stairs as much as you can tolerate. Walking outside, as long as it is nice weather, and walking on a treadmill with no incline is permitted.

Pain

- Take pain medicine as prescribed. As your pain level decreases, you may begin to take over-the-counter Extra-Strength Tylenol. Do NOT take any anti-inflammatory (Advil, Aleve, Motrin) for 10 weeks after surgery.
- Do not resume taking Fosamax for eight weeks after your fusion surgery.

Driving

You may NOT drive a car until told otherwise by your physician. You may be a passenger for short distances (about 20-30 minutes.) If you must take a longer trip, be sure to make several pit stops so that you can walk and stretch your legs. Reclining in the passenger seat seems to be the most comfortable position for most patients.

Follow-Up Appointments

When you are discharged from the hospital, a follow up appointment will be made for 2-3 weeks from your surgery date. Call 864-234-9994 to confirm your appointment.

If you have additional questions or concerns, call our office at 234-7654.