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Spine Surgery • Orthopedic Surgery • Joint Replacement Surgery • Orthopedic Trauma

## **POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR LUMBAR SPINE SURGERY**

### **MEDICATION:**

- Take pain medication as needed and transition to NSAIDs or Tylenol when you are able. Keep in mind that narcotics or certain drugs may impair your ability to drive or operate machinery.
- Consider using a mild over-the-counter laxative if necessary to facilitate regular bowel movements. Consume plenty of fluids and include fiber in your diet to maintain bowel regularity.

### **WOUND CARE:**

- You may remove the bandage on the third day after surgery and replace it with a waterproof dressing. (If instructed to cover the wound, ensure it remains dry.)
- Three days after surgery, you may resume showering. Avoid rubbing or scrubbing the surgical area, as there may be surgical glue that needs to stay on your skin.
- If the incision exhibits redness or inflammation or starts to drain excessively, contact your doctor.
- If you develop a temperature over 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit, notify your doctor.

### **ACTIVITY:**

- Initiate a walking program and gradually increase your walking distance. Shorter, more frequent walks are preferable to long ones.
- Avoid bending at the waist, twisting, or putting excessive strain on your spine. Be mindful of your body movements and maintain proper spinal alignment. You must use good body mechanics.
- Refrain from heavy lifting unless otherwise specified by your doctor; use common sense.
- Minimize prolonged periods of sitting.
- It is only advisable to drive after your initial follow-up visit with your doctor. If you must embark on a long trip, opt for a vehicle where you can lie down comfortably. Additionally, make it a point to stop and walk around for 5-10 minutes every hour.
- Rest and sleep on your side (preferred) or back. Avoid lying on your stomach.
- You may resume sexual activity as comfort allows, but take precautions to safeguard your back. Opt for the bottom position to ensure adequate back support.

**Questions/concerns? Call our office staff (361) 994-1166.**