

POSTERIOR LUMBAR FUSION POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

A patient undergoing lumbar fusion surgery should expect to remain in the hospital or extended care facility for a number of days, but length of stay is individualized. If your surgery is performed at the Surgery Center, expect to stay overnight.

Patient's are strongly encouraged to stop smoking and are advised that tobacco in any form can prevent the success of surgery resulting in a non-union or no fusion.

Wound Care

- Change your dressing once a day in the morning, that way if there are any problems they can be addressed. Take old dressing off, swab with betadine, let it dry and replace with new dressing. Do not use the hibiclens provided before surgery on your wound.
- Please DO NOT put any ointments or antimicrobial solutions over the incision
- Several drains will likely be placed during the procedure and you may be discharged with these drains in place.
- **If you notice drainage, significant redness, swelling or increased pain at the incision site, please call Jennifer at 314-368-0409 or Lori at 314-249-4578.**

Medications

- If your discharge medications are delivered by SSM Express Pharmacy to the hospital or Surgery Center prior to discharge, you may be required to provide the copayments for your medications at that time.
- You will be provided one prescription for narcotics and muscle relaxers with discharge. Any additional pain medications may be obtained through pain management.

Showering

- You may take a shower after directed by Dr. Taylor; typically 1-2 weeks after surgery
- You may use soap and water to clean the incision. Gently dry off the incision, then leave it open to air. DO NOT use the remaining hibiclens to clean the incision
- Please make sure the incision is completely dry after showering.
- DO NOT take a bath or get into a pool or lake for FOUR WEEKS after surgery.

Activities

- **Follow back precautions. When turning, while in a lying position, remember to log roll. Your hips and shoulders should be in a straight line and turn all together as a unit.**
- Place a pillow between your legs while laying on your side. This helps to provide support and this also keeps your body in alignment.
- Place frequently used objects within your reach.
- You may walk as much as you like. You may use your cane or walker if needed.
- You may engage in sexual activities two weeks following your surgery date, as long as it is not painful. You should be in a lying position with your partner on top.
- You may ride as a passenger in a car whenever you feel that you can tolerate this activity. You should sit in the front passenger seat with your seat in a slightly reclined position. It would be best to start with short distances. Allow for frequent breaks on long trips and allow yourself the opportunity to get out of the car and walk around.
- You may walk up and down stairs.

CAUTION: Operating a motor vehicle may be limited due to your inability to adequately turn from side to side. No one should operate a motor vehicle while taking narcotics, or wearing a brace. DO NOT RISK THE LIVES OF OTHERS!

Restrictions

- Do not stretch to obtain for objects out of your reach.
- Do not pick up any objects weighing more than 5 pounds of total weight for at least 6 weeks following your date of surgery. (one half gallon milk)
- Avoid stooping, bending or twisting at the hips for 6 weeks.
- No athletic activities until you have discussed your limitations with Dr. Taylor at your six week follow-up visit.
- You will be provided with the necessary braces required after surgery and will be instructed when to begin wearing them and how.

DO NOT take any anti-inflammatories (Ibuprofen, Motrin, Excedrin Migraine) until cleared by Dr. Taylor

Dr. Taylor's staff will be very specific regarding any restart dates for Plavix or Coumadin.

Wear your Bone growth stimulator 4 hours per day once instructed by Dr. Taylor's staff. Bring your Bone Growth Stimulator to every appointment. If you do not receive a Bone Growth Stimulator within 10 days of your surgery, it is your responsibility to contact Lori or Jennifer to obtain one.

Follow up appointment:

- You are required to present to the office for all scheduled post-operative appointments. We will attempt to accommodate you regarding days and times, but realize that drain outputs and wound care may dictate appointments with only a days notice.
- If no appointment has been scheduled for your follow-up five days after discharge, please call 314-336-2555 (Lori).

Questions

- For any post-operative questions please call Dr. Taylor's nurse, Lori, at 314-249-4578 or PA, Jennifer, at 314-368-0409.

Emergencies

- After business hours you may call the Emergency Exchange at 314-995-0891. The operator on call will contact Dr. Taylor. If Dr. Taylor is out of town, another physician will return your call.

Please call with any questions or concerns. We will be glad to assist you in any way to help in your recovery period.

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