

**Office: 865-541-2835**

## **LUMBAR SPINAL FUSION POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

After discharge from the hospital if you experience any problems or complications related to your surgery that you do not consider life threatening, please call our office before going to the Emergency Room.

### **LIMITATIONS:**

1. Do not drive for the first two post-op weeks. No trips with travel time longer than 1 hour for the first month post-op.
2. No lifting of more than 10 pounds and no repetitive bending for the first month post-op.

### **ACTIVITIES:**

1. Daily walking as comfort permits up to a quarter mile. After the first two weeks you may gradually increase walking distance as tolerated.
2. Stair climbing is permitted immediately post op.
3. Exercise will be discussed at the 1 month post op appointment.

### **WOUND CARE:**

1. The incision is closed with staples. The incision is dressed with gauze and tape. This initial dressing should be left on for 48 hours then removed. You will be given 5 clear Tegaderm dressings to cover the incision while showering only. When not showering, leave the incisions uncovered. If skin irritation develops stop using the Tegaderm and call our office. Do not take a tub bath until 2 weeks post op.
2. An appointment will be given to you for staple removal 7-10 days post op.
3. The incision commonly becomes slightly swollen the first week and may remain so for several weeks. If your incision becomes progressively swollen, please call the office.
4. Please call the office with any signs of infection such as redness or drainage combined with increased pain at the incision site, or a fever greater than 101.5 degrees.
5. The screws and rods are made of Titanium. They will not interfere with metal detectors or your ability to have MRI scans in the future.

### **PAIN:**

1. It is normal to have back pain and stiffness following surgery for several weeks. It is also normal to have transient episodes of leg pain, particularly at night. You will be given a prescription for pain medicine when you are discharged from the hospital.
2. You may experience some post operative constipation related to the use of anesthetic in surgery and pain medications. A stool softener is given routinely post op and should be continued as long as you are using narcotic pain medication at home. Additional measures to treat constipation which are available over the counter include:

Bisacodyl 10mg, 1-2 tablets with a glass of water or 1 Bisacodyl suppository administered per rectum

Magnesium citrate can be taken if no relief with Bisacodyl

Fleets Enema

Notify the office if you are unable to achieve a bowel movement after using these medications.

### **MEDICATIONS:**

Do not take any anti-inflammatory medications for 3 months following your surgery. This includes: Ibuprofen, Advil, Aleve, Cataflam, Celebrex, Motrin, Naprosyn, Naproxen, Indocin, Mobic, Arthrotec, vitamin E and herbal supplements. Anti-inflammatory drugs can interfere with the fusion rate.