

Neurosurgery Discharge Instructions

Anterior Lumbar Interbody Fusion

Diet:

- No restrictions.

Activity:

- Walking is encouraged and you may participate as much as you would like.
- Do **not** exercise other than walking until after your follow up appointment.
- Avoid twisting, turning, stopping, or bending
- **Avoid** exercises like aerobics, heavy house cleaning and lifting over 5-10 pounds (a gallon of milk weighs 8.5 pounds).
- Do **not** drive if you are taking pain medications, muscle relaxants, or if you are in pain.
- You **may** resume sexual activity when this is comfortable for you.
- You can return to work when you feel ready. However, you must stay within the 5-10 pound weight lifting restriction – half days might be better at first.

Wound Care:

- You **may** shower after surgery but will need to cover your incision to prevent from getting wet.
- Do **not** soak the incision in a bathtub or pool for 4 weeks.
- You **may** have staples to close the incision on your belly. These will need to be removed in about 2 weeks.
- You **may** remove the dressing the day following surgery. If there is still a small amount of bloody drainage, you can place a new sterile gauze dressing, otherwise it is recommended that you leave the wound open to air.
- You may have stitches in your back that are under the skin. These do not need to be removed, they will be absorbed by the body. There may be a small amount of surgical glue on the incision. You may peel off the leftover glue after 1 week if it is still attached.
- Do **not** put any ointments, creams, or lotions on the incision unless otherwise instructed.

Medication:

- Take all of your medications as prescribed. You **DO NOT** have to take pain medication unless it is needed.
- Do **not** use alcohol while taking pain medication.
- An over the counter stool softener for constipation is encouraged (try Dulcolax, Milk of Magnesia or Correctol at first and Magnesium Citrate or Fleets enema if needed) – anesthesia and pain medication may cause constipation.
- You may use throat sprays or drops such as Cepacol for throat discomfort

Common Issues

- Expect soreness of the wound.
- Your pain/numbness/discomfort may not be completely gone immediately after surgery. This is expected
- You may have occasional symptoms as severe as you did before surgery. If so do not be alarmed, it should subside as time goes on.

- Your abdominal wound might feel better with support from your brace.
- Wear your brace whenever you are out of bed!!!
- Have reasonable expectations; for relief and being able to resume normal activity.

Questions/Concerns:

Call the office (405-813-2600) for any of the following:

- Fever with temperature of 101°F or above
- increased redness, soreness of the wounds
- swelling or drainage from any wound
- inadequate pain relief
- nausea or vomiting
- shortness of breath
- difficulty swallowing liquids
- pain in your calf
- **any other concerns**

* It is your responsibility to call our office and schedule your follow up visit. You will need to be seen 4 weeks following surgery, **UNLESS** you have stitches or staples outside of the skin, then you will need to be seen in 2 weeks to have these removed.

*Remember we do not fill/refill any medication in between your office visits. It is your responsibility to take the medication as prescribed.