

Discharge Instructions

Lumbar Spine Surgery

Diet

- ❖ You may resume your usual diet.
- ❖ As always, you should eat a well-balanced diet in order to prevent any malnutrition or deficiency of vitamins, which would cause delays in healing.
 - There is no need to start taking any new dietary supplements or vitamins after your surgery unless otherwise advised by your physician.
- ❖ Due to irritation from the breathing tube that was used during surgery, it is normal to have some swelling of the throat causing you to have mild difficulty swallowing as well as some throat irritation. This is normal and will resolve over the next few days. However, if you have any increasing difficulty swallowing or excessive nausea or vomiting contact the office for further instructions.

Activity

- ❖ For the first 2-3 weeks after your surgery, your wound will be fragile, which requires you to refrain from some activities in order for it to heal adequately. Therefore, during this period of time...
 - Refrain from any *vigorous* activity or *vigorous* exercise.
 - Do not do anything that brings about pain in your back.
 - Do not bend over, twist your back, or lift anything heavier than a phone book. If you need to lift anything, bend at your knees and hips (not at your back) and lift with your legs.
 - Refrain from sitting for longer than 30 minutes at one time. If sitting for prolonged periods of time is necessary, then get up to walk, recline your chair, or lay down for a few minutes before sitting again.
 - Do not drive for the first two weeks. After two weeks only drive on short trips as tolerated and only if necessary.
 - Do not remain inactive. Walking and light, non-weight bearing exercises will help keep you in shape and get you to your normal routine faster.
- ❖ After this initial period, you may slowly resume your normal activities unless otherwise instructed by your physician.

Wound Care

- ❖ Keep the wound clean at all times until it has fully healed.
- ❖ Keep the wound dry for at least 7 days from the date of your surgery.
 - In order to take a shower during this period of time, you may cover the wound with a waterproof piece of plastic.
 - If your wound does get wet accidentally, dab it dry with a clean towel and let it air dry.

- ❖ There is no need to cover the wound or put any type of ointment or cream over the wound after the dressing is removed.
 - If you don't see any staples or sutures on your wound, then your incision was stitched using absorbable sutures that do not need to be removed. There may be small tape strips across the incision, which will fall off on their own after several days.
 - If you have staples or non-absorbable sutures on your wound, then they need to be removed 7-10 days after surgery (if this is your first surgery in that area) or 14 days after surgery (if this is a re-operation in the same area).
 - Call the office to make an appointment to have your sutures or staples removed within this period of time.
- ❖ If you notice any of the following or if you have any other concerns, call the office immediately to get further instructions:
 - Increased redness or pain
 - Drainage of bloody, clear, or yellow fluid
 - Fever, chills, or night sweats

Lumbar Brace

- ❖ After certain low back surgeries you may be required to wear a lumbar brace, which will be provided to you in the hospital prior to your discharge.
- ❖ If you have been told that you need to wear a brace, wear it as instructed in order to help with healing of your spine and to prevent complications.
 - You should wear your brace at all times, for as long as instructed, when you are standing, ambulating, or riding in a car, but you may take off the brace when in bed, unless otherwise instructed by your physician.

Medications

- ❖ Take all prescribed medications as instructed. Consult your physician if you experience any adverse effects or if you have any questions.

Follow-up

- ❖ Call the office at (818) 783-4949 to make a follow-up appointment for two weeks after your discharge from the hospital.
- ❖ Notify the office or go to the local emergency department if you experience any weakness, numbness, problems with urination, or any other concerning symptoms.

Nouzhan Sehati, MD
13320 Riverside Drive, Suite 208
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423
Phone: (818) 783-4949
Fax: (818) 783-7537
www.sehati.org