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POST-OPERATIVE HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS ANTERIOR POSTERIOR LUMBAR FUSION

We hope that this instruction sheet will help to answer questions which may arise after you are discharged from the hospital. Remember, even though you may feel improved, the healing process typically requires 3 months for complete recovery.

DAILY ACTIVITY

- Rest a little, walk a little, but please do not over do it!
- You will be instructed regarding increased activity level at your next office visit.
- Do not lift, push or pull anything over **5 pounds**.
- Avoid all physical exertional activity including: bending, stooping, squatting or twisting.
- Avoid stress and strain, and use good body mechanics at all times.
- **Wear your brace at any time you are up standing or walking.** Please do not alter your brace.
- **Restrict sitting to one cumulative hour per day for 6 weeks post-operatively.**
- **DO NOT DRIVE UNTIL YOUR DOCTOR HAS RELEASED YOU TO DO SO.**

COMPLICATIONS

Indications for wound infection include: fever over 102 degrees, wound drainage, increasing redness or swelling. Should you develop any of these symptoms, please notify our office. After hours or on weekends, please call the office number and you will be instructed on communication with the Physician Assistant or Doctor on call.

POST-OPERATIVE PAIN

You may continue to experience some degree of discomfort for 6-8 weeks following surgery. This is normal. The surgical site must heal completely, and this simply requires some time. Typically, your back will be sore, but severe pain is unusual. Leg pain may return on the second post-operative day, but should not be severe, and should subside. Should you experience severe pain with movement, please call the office.

You will be given a prescription for pain medication when you leave the hospital. If you do not receive this prior to discharge from the facility, please contact the office. As your post-operative pain subsides, extra strength Tylenol is appropriate to take on an as needed basis as you wean off of Hydrocodone. You may also utilize ice intermittently on your incision site. **DO NOT** apply direct heat to the incision site without the doctor's approval.

WOUND CARE

Sutures or staples are typically removed 12-14 days post-operatively. You will need to make an appointment during this time frame. It is important that you keep your incision clean and dry initially following surgery. You may shower after the sutures or staples are removed or when the doctor has cleared you.

JUST A REMINDER

- Do not drive until the doctor has cleared you. Do not sit for more than one hour per day.
- Please use common sense and not go onto uneven terrain, gravel, or slippery concrete where you are likely to slip and fall.
- Take a stool softener or laxative as needed for constipation, which can be a side effect of narcotic medication.
- You may shower when the doctor has cleared you following staple or suture removal.
- Always squat with your back straight when picking up objects off of the floor.
- If your incision site becomes red, hot or begins draining, please call the office to let the doctor know.