



Instructions After Spine Surgery

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WOUND CARE

1. Change your dressing(s) at home, as you were instructed prior to discharge.
2. Keep the incision clean and dry at all times.
3. **DO NOT REMOVE THE STERI-STRIPS.** Keep the steri-strips clean and dry. Do not apply bandage tape over the steri-strips.
4. If the incision gets wet, blot (no NOT rub) with a clean, dry towel. Then, use a hair dryer on the warm (NOT hot) setting to dry.
5. Sponge bathe for the first 2-3 days to protect the wound.
6. When permitted to shower, apply plastic wrap to skin over incision and tape well to prevent area from getting wet. Replace the dressing immediately after showering.
7. Monitor the incision. Some redness, slight swelling, tenderness, slight drainage, or slight separation of the wound edges is normal. If these increase, call Dr. Davis' office, as soon as possible.
8. If you develop fever, chills, or other surgery-related problems, please notify Dr. Davis immediately. A slight fever for a few days after surgery may be normal. For any non-emergency medical problems that do not relate to the surgery, call your primary physician. For any emergency medical problems, call 9-1-1, or go directly to an emergency room.

ACTIVITY/RESTRICTIONS

1. No lifting anything greater than five (5) pounds. No bending, twisting, reaching overhead, strenuous activity, driving, or unnecessary car trips, until given permission by Dr. Davis.
2. You should walk. Gradually increase your walking each day, taking frequent rest periods. Avoid sudden movements.
3. No tub baths, spas, or swimming for one (1) month.
4. If a brace or cervical collar has been ordered for you, wear it as instructed in the hospital. Cervical collars should be worn at all times, except to shower.
5. Clean hard brace or hard collar daily by wiping with rubbing alcohol, and allow it to dry completely before replacing it. Keep body or neck still and in neutral position while the brace or collar is off for cleaning.
6. No smoking for three (3) months. (It is better to quit altogether, of course.)

MEDICATIONS

1. No driving, operating heavy equipment, alcohol consumption, or performing activities requiring a great deal of concentration, while taking narcotic medications.
2. If you had a fusion procedure, **NO** non-steroidal anti-inflammatories, aspirin-containing products, Toradol, or steroids for three (3) months. [NOTE: Steroid-dependent patients are exempted from the above steroid restriction.]

FOLLOW-UP

1. Keep your scheduled follow-up appointment with Dr. Davis, or call to reschedule, if necessary.
2. If you have disability papers or other forms, deliver these to the medical assistants at Dr. Davis' office.