

Lumbar Spine Surgery Discharge Instructions

General

- It is normal to feel tired, weak, and sore around the incision after surgery.
- Pain, tingling or numbness in the back or legs should improve gradually as the nerves heal. This may take weeks to months.
- Use good posture and proper body mechanics as you gradually resume light activities.
- Listen to your body! If it hurts, you are most likely doing too much!

Precautions

- Do not twist or bend your back if you had fusion surgery.
- Do not lift anything heavy.
- Do not start any strengthening or stretching exercises until Dr. Cho clears you.
- Again, listen to your body! Walking is good exercise. But if it hurts, you may be doing too much and you need to slow down.

Things to watch out for

- Constant or severe pain that is not relieved by pain medications.
- Increasing numbness or weakness.
- Redness, warmth, drainage, odor, swelling, or pus from the incision.
- Fever greater than 101.0 F.
- Moderate to severe headache, especially when you are sitting or standing.
- Loss of bowel or bladder control.
- Pain, swelling, or warmth in the legs.
- Chest pain, shortness of breath, or rapid/irregular heartbeat.

If you experience any of the above call Dr. Cho immediately!

Post-operative activities

- If your bandages have been dry, you may shower 72-hours after surgery.
- Keep the incision dry.
- Leave bandages in place. If they get dirty or wet call the office.
- No baths or swimming.
- No driving until Dr. Cho clears you.
- Avoid sitting or standing for longer than 1 hour at a time.
- Follow precautions.
- Take the pain medications prescribed.
- Do not take any others pain medication unless you have discussed this with Dr. Cho specifically.
- Do not take any blood thinners or anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) unless directed.

Follow Up Appointment:

- Please call to make your follow-up appointment for 10-14 days after hospital discharge at (877) MD-ORTHO (877-636-7846).