

SAN RAMON SURGERY CENTER
200 PORTER DRIVE, SUITE 100
SAN RAMON, CA 94583
925-838-6880

Post Operative Instructions for Spinal Surgery

DO NOT DRIVE OR OPERATE MACHINERY FOR 24 HOURS.

Some anesthetics have delayed metabolism and can interfere with the ability to perform these tasks.

DO NOT DRINK ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES FOR 24 HOURS.

DO NOT MAKE IMPORTANT DECISIONS OR SIGN LEGAL DOCUMENTS UNTIL THE NEXT DAY.

DO NOT EAT HEAVY OR LARGE MEALS UNTIL THE NEXT DAY.

A heavy meal may be difficult to digest. Spicy and greasy foods should be avoided.

DO NOTIFY PHYSICIAN IF YOU HAVE NOT VOIDED WITHIN SIX HOURS.

Wound Care:

- Keep the dressing in place for 3 days after discharge from the surgery center. It can then be removed and the wound left open to air. Leave the steri-strips in place.
- Sometimes the wound may leak a little or stick to clothing in which case you may place a light gauze dressing over the wound and change it as needed.
- *If you develop a **fever over 101 degrees or have significant wound drainage** (e.g., drainage that continues to saturate dressings, soils clothing, or contains pus) you should contact your doctor immediately.*
- You should not shower until 5 days post surgery, leave steri strips in place, pat dry. Do not take baths or submerge the wound until 4 weeks after surgery.

Medications:

- Use pain medications as prescribed.
- Most pain medicines have a constipating effect that can be relieved with an “over the counter” stool softener or laxative such as Colace, Dulcolax, or Senokot S. You may also take Metamucil or Citrucil twice per day in 8 oz. of water or juice.
- **If you have had a neck fusion, DO NOT** take Motrin, Advil, Aleve, or any other “anti-inflammatory” (NSAIDs).

Driving:

- Cervical patients are not permitted to drive until cleared by our office. Do not drive while wearing the cervical brace.
- Lumbar patients driving is generally not permitted until 2-3weeks after surgery when the patient has good mobility and strength and is not taking narcotic pain medicines. **DO NOT** drive until cleared by Dr. Ball's office.

To get into a car as a passenger:

- The car should be mid-size or larger.
- The patient should sit in the front passenger seat with it as far back as possible and at a slight incline.
- **DO NOT** attempt to get into the rear seat.

Activity:

- Wear Brace at all times when out of bed.
- Light activity is ok (lifting less than 10 lbs.) Avoid stress to back, such as lifting, pushing or pulling for 45 days.
- Gentle walking is an excellent form of exercise. Set a goal for 30 minutes a day.
- Avoid repetitive stooping and bending at the waist.

Neck Fusion Patients Only:

- If you are given a cervical brace, you should keep this in place at all times. Wear the Philadelphia brace for showering.
- Cervical brace must be worn for at least **SIX** weeks or until ok'd by your doctor. **Do not** bend or twist neck.

Make an appointment to see your doctor in 10-14 days.

CALL PHYSICIAN IMMEDIATELY IF YOU:

- ✓ Observe excessive bleeding, redness, or swelling;
- ✓ Have pain which is not well controlled or increasing, or the medication causes a reaction;
- ✓ Notice a foul odor emanating from surgical site, or have a temperature of 101°F or higher for at least 4-6 hours;
- ✓ Are leaking fluid or pus from your wound.
- ✓ If it is an emergency and you cannot reach your physician, go to the nearest emergency room or dial 911.