



## Discharge Instructions for Spine Surgery Patients

Call **616-459-7101** with any questions regarding your care or upcoming appointments.

### Incisional Care

- No use of tobacco products of any kind. Stop smoking.
- You may remove your dressing 2 days after surgery. Provided that your incision is not draining we ask that you leave it open to air. Your sutures will be under the skin, and there may be purple-colored skin glue over the top. Some bruising is normal.
- You may shower 2 days after your surgery date. Do not scrub or pick at your incision. Do not soak in a bath or any water until your incision is completely healed (approx. 6-8 weeks).
- You will receive the same medication in the hospital as will be prescribed by your surgeon for home use.
- **DO NOT put creams or ointments of any kind on or near your incision. This includes: Scar Creams, Neosporin, Bacitracin, Vitamin E Oil, and many more.**
- Contact us at **616-459-7101** if your incision becomes red, tender and continues to drain or you run a temperature of greater than 101 degrees. Please take your temperature with an oral thermometer before you call.

### Activity

- Continue to increase your amount of time walking and gradually increase the distance. Take frequent breaks as needed. Your goal should be 1 mile per day at 4-6 weeks and 3 miles per day at 10-12 weeks.
- Do not lift or carry anything heavier than 10pounds for 4 weeks postoperatively.
- We ask that you do not walk a dog >10pounds for 4 weeks postoperatively.
- Use good body mechanics and bend with your knees. Avoid bending, lifting or twisting for 6 weeks.
- Physical therapy may be ordered at your second (4-6weeks) post op visit.
- Contact us immediately at **616-459-7101** if you feel that you are having increased difficulty swallowing or breathing as well as bowel or bladder changes. You will be instructed to go to the nearest Emergency room.

### Pain Control

- **For medication refills please call 616-459-7101 between 9am-4pm Monday through Wednesday. A 48 hour notice is required for all refills. Refill requests for Narcotics after Thursday will be filled on the following Monday.**
- Our goal is to get your pain under control. **(Control does not mean eliminate.)**
- Apply ice to the incision for any swelling.
- You cannot drive while under the influence of narcotics.
- **If you had a fusion you must refrain from taking any NSAIDS for 12 weeks post op**
- Your post-operative narcotic medication will be refilled up to 6-8 weeks after your surgery date. If after that time you continue to need narcotics you will be referred to one of our pain management specialists or your primary care physician where your pain can be more closely monitored and managed accordingly.

FOR QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL 616-459-7101 DURNING NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS (MON-FRI 8A-5P) IF IT IS AFTER HOURS AND URGENT, PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE AND YOU WILL BE CONNECTED WITH THE ANSWERING SERVICE. AFTER HOURS EMERGENCIES DO NOT INCLUDE MEDICATION REFILLS. IF YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY, OR ARE UNSURE GO TO THE ER AND HAVE THEM CONTACT THE ON-CALL PHYSICIAN.