

# Rochester Brain and Spine

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## Discharge Instructions

### Lumbar Laminectomy/Foramintomy/Discectomy

- **Medication:** You may use Tylenol or Ibuprofen as needed for pain. Narcotic pain medication may be dispensed and used on an as needed basis. Prescriptions for pain medications will be provided for up to 4 weeks after surgery. *After 4 weeks, you will need to have all pain medications managed by your primary care doctor or pain management doctor.*
- **Activity/Restriction:** You should walk daily, gradually increasing your time and distance as tolerated. Strict bed rest is not recommended as it will contribute to your back stiffness and pain. Avoid repetitive bending, twisting and sitting for longer than 45 minutes for the first 2 weeks. The act of prolonged sitting, bending or twisting causes more stress on your discs and can cause recurrent herniated discs in the early postoperative period.

You will be provided a lumbar brace. You may wear the brace as needed for support but remove the brace for sleeping and showering. You may also remove the brace when sitting in a support position. If you have any issues with your brace – contact Southern Cross Medical Supply at 585-334-5530.

Lifting is not to exceed 10 pounds. A gallon of milk is 8-9 pounds. You are to avoid strenuous activity. You may go up and down stairs as tolerated.

You may begin to drive when you feel comfortable, about 1-2 weeks after surgery, provided that you have weaned yourself off of the narcotic pain medication and are out of the brace.

- **Wound Care:** You may remove the dressing over your incision(s) the day after you get home and leave the incision open to air. Keep the wound as dry as possible. You may also shower the day after you get home as well. Make sure to cover your incision(s) when in the shower [we recommend covering your incision(s) with Saran wrap and paper/silk tape] for the first week. You will have steri-strips [pieces of tape] over your incision(s). These will fall off on their own – about 10-14 days after surgery. Do NOT apply any lotions or creams to the incision [this includes Antibacterial cream, Neosporin or any scar creams]. No tub baths, pools or hot tubs until the incision(s) are well-healed [about 6-8 weeks].
- **General:** Make sure to drink plenty of fluids and use a stool softener after surgery. We recommend that you start taking Colace 100mg twice a day starting 5 days before your surgery and then increasing the Colace to 200mg twice a day after surgery. If you start to have diarrhea – contact the office and we will adjust the dose of the Colace.

Please call the office if you develop any of the following symptoms: fevers, chills, difficulty with urination or bowel movements [despite medications], persistent nausea or vomiting, severe pain not relieved with pain medications [some pain is to be expected], any redness or drainage from the incision. REMEMBER – smoking greatly reduces tissue healing. If you smoke, there is no better time to quit than now!