

Anterior Cervical Discectomy / Fusion Posterior Cervical Fusion Discharge Instructions

Incision Care

- Take a shower at least once a day. (no bath tubs, pools, or Jacuzzis). Wash the incision each day with a clean soapy wash cloth, rinse with water, pat dry. You may wash right over the steri strips (paper tapes) on your incision.
- If the incision is draining change the dressing twice daily. If there is no drainage, leave the incision line open to air.
- Remove steri strips (paper tapes) 7 days after surgery.
- Contact the office if you develop a temperature of 101 degrees F or greater, inflammation, redness, swelling, or drainage from your incision, pain that is not relieved by rest, ice packs, and your pain medications, or if you have any problems or questions prior to your return visit. **Office number to call: 734-434-4110**

Activity

- Avoid Excessive activity.
- No lifting anything weighting more than 2lbs.
- No bending or twisting of your neck.
- No driving your car and no excessive riding in a car for at least one-month unless instructed otherwise. Do not drive while on pain medications.
- Avoid pushing / pulling activities with your arms. No heavy housework or yard work (no vacuuming, lifting laundry, mowing grass, raking, gardening, etc.)
- You may go up and down stairs.
- No exercising EXCEPT walking. You should start taking short frequent walks daily. Staying in bed all the time is not good for you. You may walk outdoors as soon as you feel ready. You should then begin to gradually increase your walking as much as you can comfortably do. Walks should be leisurely not strenuous.
- You may resume sexual intercourse whenever it is comfortable for you to do so.
- If your doctor ordered a collar for you, you should wear the collar as directed by your doctor.

Pain

- You will be given a prescription for pain medication and muscle relaxant for cramps and spasms. Remember to use it only if you need it and only as prescribed.
- Narcotic pain medication WILL CAUSE CONSTIPATION. Your own laxative of choice should be used if this becomes a problem. Follow the "Bowel Instruction Sheet"
- 24 hours' notice is requested for refills, between the hours of 8:30am – 4:00pm.
Do not wait until you run out of medication.
- Use an ice pack over your incision and/or bone graft site for 20-40 minutes, at least four times a day to decrease swelling and discomfort.

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ANN ARBOR NEUROSCIENCE cares
For brain and head problems with its
team of neurosurgeons.

ANN ARBOR SPINE CENTER takes a
Multidisciplinary team approach to back
and neck problems to emphasize
nonsurgical treatment options before
exploring spine surgery.

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Board-Certified Neurosurgeon
Board-Certified in Pain
Medicine Fellowship-Trained in
Spine

MARK H. FALAHEE, M.D.
Board-Certified Orthopedic Surgeon
Fellowship-Trained in Spine

DOUGLAS F. GEIGER, M.D.
Board-Certified Orthopedic Surgeon
Fellowship-Trained in Spine/Scoliosis

ELISA J. KUCIA, M.D.
Board-Eligible Neurosurgeon
Fellowship-Trained in Spine

GEOFFREY M. THOMAS, M.D.
Board-Certified Neurosurgeon

MARK E. OPPENLANDER, M.D.
Board-Eligible Neurosurgeon
Fellowship-Trained in Spine
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CLINICAL TEAM:

KURT J. HIESTER, MS, PA-C
LINDSEY E. LORELLO, MS, PA-C
JOHNATHAN OGAR, PA-C

PATTI REEN, BSN, RN
JANICE RUDEL, RN
RENEE IZARD, MSN, CNL, RN

REFERRALS & APPOINTMENTS:

ANN ARBOR • MAIN CLINIC
5315 ELLIOTT DR., SUITE 102
YPSILANTI, MI. 48197
Within the Michigan Orthopedic Center on
the St. Joseph Mercy Hospital Campus

*Additional satellite locations in
Chelsea and Brighton*

PHONE: 734-434-4110
FAX: 734-434-1966

On-line educational encyclopedia
With home remedies, symptom charts and
video animations about spine at:
www.AnnArborSpineCenter.com

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Other Important Information

- Do NOT take anti-inflammatory medications (Motrin, Advil, Datril, Ibuprofen, Aleve, Naprosyn) until approved by your doctor. These medications can decrease the quality and amount of fusion that occurs in your back.
- Tobacco users should NOT smoke for at least 1 year following surgery. This includes cigarettes, cigars, pipes, chewing tobacco, marijuana, nicotine gum, nicotine patches, and second-hand smoke. The use of tobacco can cause your bone graft to be absorbed and your back not to fuse.

Return Visit

- If you have staples closing your wound you will have an appointment in our office 10 – 14 days after surgery to have them removed, unless other arrangements have been made.

Ice Packs

- 3 Cups of water
- 1 cup rubbing alcohol
- Divided into 2 large Ziploc bags. Place in the freezer until it turns to slush. Place a clean dry towel between your skin and the slush bag or place in a clean pillowcase to avoid freezing the skin, Leave on for 20-40 minutes, then remove. Repeat this at least 4 times a day.