

FLORIDA BACK INSTITUTE
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Postoperative Spine Surgery Discharge Instructions – Lumbar Spine

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

General Activities: First 2 weeks after surgery:

1. No sitting for more than 45 minutes in a chair. A recliner can be used for longer periods of time. Do not sit in low-sitting chairs or overstuffed, soft chairs.
2. No standing for more than 45 minutes. You should get off your feet and rest during the day. Take a 1 1/2 – hour rest in the mid- morning and mid- afternoon.
3. You may shower 7 days after the surgery. Cover the dressing with plastic (Saran wrap) and tape. Do not let the water hit the incision directly. Face the shower directly. After showering, remove the plastic (Saran wrap) and change the dressing. You may not shower if the incision is reddened or draining. No tub baths.
4. The Steri-Strips on the incision may come off; however, do not remove them until 10 days after the surgery. Change dressing to incision every day with 4 x 4 gauze and tape. Once the drainage has stopped, you may leave it open to air.
5. No driving or returning to work until you are seen in the office.
6. No lifting more than 10 pounds (a gallon of milk), and keep the weight close to your chest. No bending or twisting at the waist, or reaching overhead to pick up objects.
7. You may walk for exercise, starting at a moderate pace only, and only for 1/2 hour each time. You may increase this as tolerated.
8. Stairs may be used with caution several times per day.
9. Use an elevated toilet seat, if it was prescribed to you during your hospital stay. This will help to decrease pain and make sitting easier.
10. If you were prescribed a brace, it should be worn while walking. You do not need to wear the brace in bed or while sitting, unless specifically instructed. You may go to the bathroom without the brace, provided it is close and you have not been instructed otherwise.

When to call the office:

1. If you have a fever over 101.6 degrees Fahrenheit, chills, or nausea for over 24 hours in duration that is not related to a cold or flu.
2. If you have redness around the incision or drainage from the incision (more than a quarter size on the gauze dressing).
3. Increased pain (that is not relieved by all the prescribed pain medication), or weakness in the legs. Expect some numbness and tingling, but this should resolve in time.

Follow-up appointment: Call office after discharge at (561)-988-8988