

Post-Operative Instructions For Dr. Moquin Patients

A. Post-Op Visit

1. Suture or staple removal will be done approximately 2-3 weeks after the surgery in the office. Please call **(315) 464-5509** for an appointment the next business day after discharge if not already made in the hospital.
2. You will need to return to the office in four to six weeks after discharge. Your appointment will be made upon discharge from the hospital. If you are discharged over the weekend, please call on Monday for an appointment.
3. You will usually need x-rays every 4-6 weeks to monitor the bone healing process. Please make certain that you either bring the x-rays or the computer disc with you. A paper report is not sufficient, as we would like to look at the actual pictures. If you have your x-rays done at University Hospital, we will be able to see them on the computer.

B. Back Brace

1. Your brace is used to prevent excessive motion to your spine after surgery. You should wear your back brace whenever you are up and about, walking or doing activities. You do not need to sleep with your brace unless you are told to do so. Sitting around the house, moving from the bed to the chair, going to the bathroom do not require you to wear your brace, again, unless you have been specifically told to do so. Please wear your brace as it was fitted for you in the hospital. A brace worn incorrectly may cause you discomfort.

C. Cervical Collar

1. Your cervical collar is used to protect your neck while it heals. It is important that you wear your collar at all times except when showering. This will protect your neck from any motion while it heals. Please wear the brace snugly as it was fitted for you in the hospital. IF the brace is worn incorrectly it may cause you discomfort and you run the risk of not healing in correct alignment.

D. Pain

1. You will be given pain medications at your pre-op visit and should fill them prior to surgery. You will be given a narcotic for intense pain and a NSAID for inflammation. You are to use these as directed. It is our intention to help you stop taking the narcotics as soon as possible. If you have nerve pain we will prescribe Neurontin or Elavil for this pain. Please take it as directed.
2. You should expect to have some discomfort and pain after surgery. The brace that you wear can also create some pressure tenderness in your back. This is all normal. If you should develop fever, excessive wound tenderness, redness around the wound or any drainage please call the office immediately. If you develop any bladder or bowel incontinence or notice any new weakness in your arms or legs please call and let us know.

E. Activity

1. After your surgery you should immediately begin walking. In the hospital, the nurses and physical therapy will have you up by the day after your surgery. Please cooperate; it is in your best interest to move. Moving is the best pain killer and will help start your bowels moving again. When you are home, start by slowly moving around the house and then as your stamina builds go outside. In our Syracuse weather, please be careful about slipping on snow and ice. Use your good judgment about going outside. You can also go to the malls and walk when the weather is bad.
Please feel free to try to get back to normal activities as soon as possible.
Our hope is that after 3-4 weeks you will be able to walk several miles each day.
2. You should not do any heavy lifting. **Do Not Lift** anything greater than 20 lbs.
3. Tips: Stand up slowly when getting out of bed. Rest on the side of the bed until you feel strong enough to stand. When getting out of a chair, again, move slowly. Stand first for a second before moving forward. This will help eliminate dizziness that is normal after surgery.
4. Driving: You cannot drive with a brace on. You are considered an incapacitated driver if you must use a brace. **Do Not Drive While Taking Narcotics!!**

F. Numbness

1. It is important that you realize that the numbness you are experiencing may not get better and in fact could get worse. The surgery you are having has the potential to increase the numbness. There is also a good possibility that you will have numbness around the incision and in areas of the skin on your back for quite some time.

Tobacco Use Is The Leading Cause Of Failure Of Spinal Fusion Surgery!!!

1. **The use of tobacco in any form will significantly hinder your ability to heal from the surgery.** You should not smoke tobacco, chew tobacco or be around people who are smoking. Second hand smoke is as bad as smoking yourself. Hopefully you have stopped using tobacco before the surgery. Nicotine patches are as bad as actually using tobacco because it is the nicotine that causes the problem with bone healing.

If you feel that you will need the help of medications to remain off of tobacco, we will refer you to your regular health care provider to prescribe and monitor the use of Wellbutrin or Chantix. Please request this assistance if needed.