

Ongoing Care Following Lumbar Fusion

Wound

Please keep wound clean and dry. Bandage can be removed five days following surgery. You do not need to reapply a new dressing. Keep the incision uncovered and open to air.

Showering is allowed when the wound, including the drain site, have been dry without any drainage for the preceding 48 hours. The wound should not be exposed directly to the water (i.e. if wound is on back face the shower, if wound is on front, back to shower only). If incision becomes wet, pat dry with a towel after showering. No soaking until seen in the office and your wound is completely healed.

You will have sutures that are underneath the skin that will absorb over time. There is a layer of topical skin adhesive over the incision which may appear purple. This will begin to peel off on its own. Do not peel this layer.

Please check incision at least once daily.

If you have staples or sutures in your incision, they may be removed at your 3-week post op that is already scheduled.

Brace

Brace is to be worn at all times for 3 months following surgery, except when sleeping or showering.

You may be referred to Orthofix for a bone stimulator. This is highly encouraged to promote bone growth after surgery. You will receive a call from Orthofix to get you fitted.

Activity

No twisting, bending, or lifting, pushing, or pulling anything greater than 5 pounds for 3 months following surgery.

Sleep only on back or sides.

Driving is not permitted until off all narcotic pain medication.

Walk several times daily for exercise. Use of recumbent bike is okay.

No sitting longer than 30 minutes at one time, should get up for a few minutes and move every 30 minutes.

No tobacco, marijuana products, or anti-inflammatories (Ibuprofen/Advil).

Please contact our office if you have any of the following:

- Drainage from incisional site
- Opening of incisions
- Fevers greater than 100.4°
- Flu like symptoms
- Increased lower extremity pain, swelling, warmth or redness, increased heart rate, shortness of breath, or chest pain
- Urinary tract infection
- Nerve problems (inability to walk on toes or heels, numbness, loss of bowel/bladder control).