

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Your Spinal Surgery:

1. What do I need to bring on the day of surgery?

- *You will meet with the preoperative nurse a few days before the surgery and she will advise you as to what you will need to bring with you to the hospital*

2. What is the estimated length of time for the surgery?

- *Surgery varies between one and a half to six hours or more. It is dependent on what actually needs to be done.*

3. How long will I be in the hospital?

- *Anywhere from one to five days. It is all patient specific (some people need to stay longer than others).*

4. Will my pain be gone once I wake up from surgery?

- *Remember that you have had the problem for some time. It will take time for the pain to be relieved, meaning several weeks up to two to three months.*

5. How do I take care of my surgical incision?

- *Do not put any type of cream or ointment on your incision. It may cause problems with how the incision heals.*
- *Do not put alcohol or hydrogen peroxide on your incision as it can delay healing and/or increase the size of the scar.*
- *You may shower and wash your hair 48 hours after the surgery unless told not to by the neurosurgeon. Be sure to dry the area thoroughly.*
- *Do not soak in a bath tub or jacuzzi for the first two months without first asking your neurosurgeon*

6. When can I return to work?

- *It takes an average of six weeks for full recovery from the surgery. Depending on the nature of your work, you may go back to work as early as 14 days after surgery. Feel free to discuss with your neurosurgeon when you are cleared to go back to work.*

7. When can I continue my activities?

- *Walking daily is a good exercise. Progress your walking on a daily basis. Do not go for long walks without someone going with you for the first few times. This is to ensure that should you become tired, someone is with you to help you get home safely.*
- *No heavy lifting, bending, pushing, pulling, or climbing on ladders or stools. Lift only with both hands and not more than 10 pounds for the first two weeks, gradually increasing this over the next several weeks.*
- *Sexual relations may be resumed, but positions that cause discomfort, neck or back strain should be avoided.*

- *Depending on the type of procedure you had done, you will be able to drive anywhere from two to four weeks on average. You may drive when you have recovered full coordination, are completely off all narcotic pain medications and are experiencing minimal pain. Ask your neurosurgeon after the surgery is over to get this clarified. Patients wearing a neck brace may not drive until neurosurgeon has removed collar.*
- **Neck Surgery**
 - *You may need to wear a neck brace for approximately six to eight weeks. Get clearance from the neurosurgeon before you stop wearing it.*
 - *Avoid contact sports or strenuous activities for approximately six months. Get clearance from the neurosurgeon before starting.*
- **Back Surgery**
 - *Depending on the type of procedure you had done, you may need to wear a back brace for approximately three months. Get clearance from the neurosurgeon before you stop wearing it.*
 - *Avoid strenuous activities for approximately four to six weeks. Get clearance from the neurosurgeon before resuming.*
 - *Avoid contact sports for approximately eight weeks. Get clarification from the neurosurgeon before resuming.*

8. When do I call my neurosurgeon?

- *Temperature greater than 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit taken by mouth.*
- *Swelling, redness, or drainage around the incision site.*
- *Neck surgery: watch for severe difficulty swallowing, numbness, tingling, pain, or weakness to your neck, shoulders, arms, and/or hands.*
- *Back surgery: watch for new symptoms of numbness, tingling, pain, or weakness to your back, legs, or feet.*

9. When do I return to clinic for a follow-up appointment?

- *Our Medical Assistant will contact patients 1-2 weeks after surgery to schedule a post-operative follow-up appointment with our Physician Assistant 4 weeks after surgery. This can be scheduled as a telehealth or in-person appt. At this appt you will be evaluated and given a recommendation as to when you need to see your neurosurgeon for a postoperative visit (typically 8-12 weeks after surgery)*
- *If you have sutures or staples, then you will need to return within seven to fourteen days from the date of your surgery for them to be removed, please call our office to schedule an appointment.*

10. How do I apply for temporary disability?

We ONLY give temporary total disability to patients who have recently undergone a surgery. If you will be filing a State disability claim please visit www.edd.ca.gov/Disability to file your claim online and complete necessary forms electronically. There is a fee of \$40 for the completion of each disability and FMLA form. It is the patients responsibility to call our office with their receipt number once the claim has been submitted. Please allow 7-10 business days for completion

11. How do I apply for a temporary handicapped parking placard?

- *Patients will need to visit the DMV website at www.dmv.ca.gov to print out the form. Patients must complete their portion and deliver both pages to our office. We will complete the form giving the patient a temporary handicapped placard for up to 6 months. We will call the patient once the form is complete so that they may file with the DMV*
 - **Please Allow 7-10 Business days for the completion of any forms**
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