

NEUROSURGICAL ASSOCIATES, L.L.C.

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Dear Patient,

You are being discharged following **anterior cervical discectomy with interbody fusion and plating** of level (s)_____. These instructions are to be followed as a general guideline. If you have any questions, problems or worries, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CALL THE OFFICE AT (801)507-9555. The office is open from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm Monday through Friday. If it is after hours, a weekend or holiday, call the same number and the answering service will contact Dr. Reichman in emergent situations.

1. Please call the office at your earliest convenience to set up your first follow up appointment, which should be approximately 4-6 weeks from the date of your surgery.
2. Keep your incision clean and dry for one week; this is very important to prevent infection. Cover your incision with plastic prior to showering. Then remove the plastic and use a hair dryer to dry the steri strips. The steri strips may be removed 1 week from your surgery date, but not sooner! After the steri strips are removed, there is no need to cover your incision and you may shower normally. It is not unusual for the skin around your incision to be slightly swollen and red, maybe even warm to the touch. These are all signs of the inflammatory response which is part of normal healing. Use of ice-packs for 20 minute intervals is acceptable. If there is drainage from your wound and/or you have a fever (taken with a thermometer), call the office.
3. Your throat may be sore from the endotracheal tube which is part of general anesthesia. Throat lozenges will help relieve the discomfort. Normal wake/sleep patterns may be altered due to the stress of the surgery and anesthetic. Be patient; your regular schedule will return. Expect some muscle stiffness and overall body fatigue. Everyone recovers at his/her own rate. Adequate rest and nutrition will contribute to the healing process.
4. Walk as much as you can! No lifting greater than 25lbs. Minimize twisting, bending, squatting and stooping. Do only what it takes to get dressed. Remember you have just had surgery; give your body time to heal. Your cervical collar is optional; if you find it provides support, wear it when up and around or any other time if helpful.
5. You will be discharged with a prescription for pain medication _____, an anti-inflammatory _____, and possibly an antispasmodic _____. The instructions for each will be printed on the bottles at the pharmacy. It is very important that you take the medications as prescribed. If you do not understand the directions, ask for clarification from the pharmacist or call the office. The pain medications are habit-forming and should be taken only as needed. It is acceptable and recommended to substitute a non-narcotic pain medication such as Extra Strength Tylenol as soon as possible. Resume all pre-admission medications which have been prescribed by other physicians.