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## **Discharge Instructions**

### Lumbar fusion

#### **Activity:**

1. You may walk and use stairs as tolerated. We encourage walking postoperatively to decrease pain and the chances of blood clots in the legs especially in the first two weeks. You do not need to stay at home.
2. Avoid strenuous activities. Lift no more than 20 pounds for the first 8 weeks.
3. Try to avoid driving until seen for the first post-op visit.
4. You may shower beginning the second day after surgery. You may let the water run down on the surgical site. Do not bathe.
5. You may have sex as desired.
6. You may resume your usual diet.
7. If you are a smoker, do NOT smoke or be around anyone who is smoking. Smoking interferes with the healing of the bone in your neck. Avoid smoking for 9 months.

#### **Medications:**

1. Take the pain medication you have been prescribed as needed. If you do not need strong pain medication, you may take just Tylenol.  
If you were given a muscle relaxant, such as Robaxin or methocarbamol, take this medication at night.
2. Do not resume blood thinners until seen for your first post-op visit or in the first 10 days after the surgery.
3. Do NOT take any pain medications such as Aspirin, Advil, Motrin, Aleve, Naprosyn, Ibuprofen, Excedrin, etc. These medications tend to interfere with the healing of the bone in the neck.
4. If you are constipated, use milk of magnesia as directed on the bottle or other stool softeners.

#### **Follow-up care:**

1. Call the doctor's office for an appointment (708.765.3999). You will need to be seen around 10 days after the surgery unless instructed otherwise.
2. Call the doctor if you get any of the following:
  - Severe pain
  - Fever
  - Bleeding from the surgical site
  - Difficulty breathing
  - Swelling, redness or any drainage from the surgical site.
  - Weakness or numbness not present before the surgery
  - Bowel or bladder incontinence
3. You may call for any other questions or concerns as needed. However, if you only need your medication refilled, call during our normal office hours to get them refilled (7:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.), Monday – Friday.