

# Spine Care Specialists

Orthopaedic Specialists of Northwest Indiana, P.C.

730 45<sup>th</sup> Street  
Munster, Indiana 46321

Telephone (219) 924-3300

## DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

### *For patients who have undergone: Cervical Spine Fusions*

<b>WOUND CARE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Upon discharge from the hospital you will be provided with a soft collar. You may shower two (2) days after surgery, (without collar on).</li><li>• The collar <b>must</b> be kept dry.</li><li>• Thoroughly dry incision site after showering, and then reapply the soft collar.</li><li>• <b>NO TUB BATHS!</b></li><li>• Do <b>not</b> remove the steri-strips</li><li>• Should one of the steri-strips become loose or start to fall off, you may gently remove it.</li></ul>
<b>INCISIONAL SWELLING</b>	<p>Swelling around the incision after surgery is normal. You may even notice a slight increase in swelling after activities. This should dissipate in time; however:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b><i>Please report any severe increased pain, swelling, redness, fever, drainage, or intractable pain immediately!</i></b></li></ul>
<b>BONE GRAFT DONOR SITE</b>	<p>The bone graft site can be a source of pain and discomfort.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b><i>You may apply a cold pack over the bone graft site intermittently.</i></b></li></ul> <p>These symptoms should dissipate over a period of time and may even linger more than 2-3 months after surgery.</p>
<b>POST-OPERATIVE BLUES</b>	<p>So now you're feeling better and your current discomfort is nothing compared to what you endured before surgery – or perhaps you feel quite the opposite.</p> <p>Many patients have verbalized their frustration at not being able to resume normal activities as soon as they thought they would, for example: driving, going back to work, or simple activities of daily living. Having to limit and curtail your activities along with pain and discomfort can leave you with the impression that you will never get better.</p> <p>There is a light at the end of the tunnel! Remember that your body needs time to recover from major surgery. How you take care of yourself in the postoperative period can have a direct bearing on your ultimate outcome. This is the time to take good care of yourself.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b><i>Rest and eat a well-balanced diet, rich in protein;</i></b></li><li>• <b><i>Walk every day, if possible; and</i></b></li><li>• <b><i>Try to maintain a positive attitude about yourself.</i></b></li></ul> <p>Remember, it takes a great deal of courage and determination to undergo what you have been through!</p>
<b>POST-OPERATIVE EXAMINATION</b>	<p>Patients are seen and examined by their physician at two (2) weeks and six (6) weeks after the date of surgery, unless otherwise instructed. <b><i>Please contact the office to schedule this appointment.</i></b></p> <p>If you have any specific questions regarding your progress, it is a good idea to list them and address them at your office visit. A prescription for physical therapy will be prescribed, if needed.</p>
<b>POST-OPERATIVE ACTIVITIES</b>	<p>Once you are home, the aerobic exercise that is encouraged is <b>walking</b>. This should be done in a progressive manner, as tolerated.</p>