

Discharge Instructions: Microdiscectomy and Lumbar Decompression without Fusion

Wound Care

- The incision is covered with skin glue with a gauze and clear adhesive dressing on top.
- You may start showering on the 2nd day after leaving the hospital.
- The gauze and adhesive dressing should be removed prior to showering. While showering, the skin glue is a water-tight barrier. After showering, pat dry the wound and apply a new barrier to prevent the wound rubbing on the neck brace. Gauze and tape or several Band-Aids may be used and can be changed as needed for moisture in the dressing.
- You may **not** submerge the wound under standing water until cleared to do so in the doctor's office (i.e. no baths, hot tubs, or swimming pools).
- The skin glue will fall off on its own. If it begins to peel, carefully trim the glue at the skin edge. This usually takes around 1-2 weeks.

Post-Surgery Pain

- Pain after surgery is normal. You may have some return of your pre-surgery symptoms and this is normal. Overall your pain should slowly decrease. You may have good and bad days.
- The pain medication (Percocet aka oxycodone/acetaminophen) may be taken every 4-6 hours as needed for pain.
- The stool softener (Colace) should be taken 2 times a day to prevent constipation. You may stop Colace when you are no longer taking Percocet.

- As your pain decreases, you may stop the Percocet and Colace and switch to over-the-counter Extra-Strength Tylenol (500mg) and over-the-counter ibuprofen (400mg) which may be taken together every 6 hours.
- Do **not** take ibuprofen if you have a history of stomach ulcers or have been told by your primary physician to avoid non-steroidal anti-inflammatory pain medications.

Post-Surgery Activity

- There are activity restrictions for 6 weeks after surgery: 1) No bending past 90 degrees. 2) No heavy lifting more than 10 lbs. 3) No twisting.
- Frequent walking is encouraged after surgery. Please avoid walking alone until you are confident that you will not fall. Please also avoid any activity that causes significant pain.
- Gentle physical therapy for stretching and strengthening may be started after your first post-op appointment.
- You may return to work when your pain is controlled and you are able to follow the above activity restrictions.
- You may return to driving when you are no longer taking opioid pain medication, your strength has returned, and your reaction time has returned to its pre-operative level. Most patients do not return to driving prior to their first post-operative visit.

Follow-up Visit

- The first follow up visit will usually be 2-4 weeks following surgery.
- If you do not already have your follow up appointment with Dr. Johnson, please call the Huntington Ortho office for assistance: (626) 795-0282.



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Please call the office or proceed to the nearest ER for severe pain, fever (temp >100.4), wound drainage for more than 1 week, or any other concerning symptoms.