

DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

Cervical Surgery

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YOUR COLLAR

Depending on the type of surgery you are having, you may be prescribed a cervical collar to wear postoperatively. In general, this collar can be taken off to shower, and immediately replaced after showering, but should be worn all other times. Some collars come with a second set of pads to allow you to wash the existing set and replace them.



SHOWERING

You may shower as normal 48hrs after your surgery, removing the collar for the shower. If the postoperative dressing is still in place, it should be removed before showering, and the incision left open to the air. If the incision is draining, call Dr. Seiner for instructions, and do not shower. Hair washing is permissible while in the shower. No tub baths, hot tubs or whirlpools until seen in the office.



EXERCISE

- You may do unlimited walking and stair climbing. Walking outside (in nice weather only) or walking on a treadmill is also allowed and encouraged.
- Do NOT lift anything weighing greater than 10-15lbs. Especially try to avoid lifting or reaching above your head.



INCISION

Please make sure your incisions are checked at least twice daily for signs and symptoms of infection: If any of the below should occur, please call the office.

- ✓ Drainage from incisional site
- ✓ Opening of incisions
- ✓ Fevers greater than 101
- ✓ Flu-like symptoms
- ✓ Increased redness and/or tenderness

If you have **staples or sutures** (not tape) on your incision they may be removed 2 weeks following your surgery. This may be done by a visiting nurse, or by making an appointment to come into the office.



SLEEPING

- You may sleep in any position which makes you comfortable as long as your collar is securely in place. Many patients find comfort sleeping in a recliner chair. It is normal to have difficulty sleeping for the first several weeks following your surgery. We recommend trying Benadryl or Tylenol-PM (both are over the counter drugs at the drugstore).



EATING

- It is normal to have a sore throat and some difficulty swallowing solid foods. This may persist for several weeks. Eating soft foods like yogurt, macaroni and mashed potatoes will help, and you must focus on chewing well and swallowing with care.



PAIN

- Do NOT take any anti-inflammatory medication (Advil, Alleve, Motrin) for the first six months following your surgery. If you feel you do need your prescribed pain medication, you may use regular or extra-strength Tylenol.
- It is normal to have some discomfort between your shoulder blades following surgery. To help alleviate persistent soreness around the bone graft site or between the shoulder blades, apply ice or warm moist compresses. It is normal for graft discomfort to persist for several weeks following your surgery. The best thing is to keep walking and strengthen the hip muscle.



DRIVING

- You should avoid driving a car until speaking to Dr. Seiner at your first postoperative visit, unless told otherwise. You may be a passenger for short distances (20-30 minutes). If you must take a longer trip, make sure to make several stops so that you can walk around and stretch your legs. Reclining the passenger seat seems to be the most comfortable position for most patients. It can be illegal to drive a car while wearing a cervical orthosis.



FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS, QUESTIONS or CONCERNS

Please make an appointment for 2-3 weeks from your surgery date.