

# DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

## Lumber Discetomy

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### 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.



### SHOWERING

You may shower as normal 48 hours after surgery. Remove the large, bulky bandages from your incision, and provided there is no drainage, you may get the incision wet. If your belt rubs over the incision, cover it with a dry sterile dressing after each shower. If not, you may leave it open to the air. Hair washing is permissible while in the shower. No tub baths, hot tubs or whirlpools until seen in the office.



### EXERCISE

OK to lift objects weighing less than 10-15 lbs.

- Try not to bend or twist at the waist-always bend your knees!!
- Limit your sitting to 20-30 minute intervals. You should lie down or walk in between sitting periods.
- Walk as much as possible-let discomfort be your guide. You may also go up and down stairs as much as you can tolerate. Walking outside (as long as it is nice weather) or walking on a treadmill is permitted and encouraged.



### DRIVING

- You may drive a car when you feel comfortable and are not under the influence of a narcotic medication, but wait at least 72 hours from surgery. 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.



### 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).



### PAIN

Take pain medication as prescribed. As your pain level decreases, you may begin to take over-the-counter Extra Strength Tylenol. Do not combine this at any one time with a narcotic, as many narcotic medications have Tylenol in them.



### FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS, QUESTIONS or CONCERNS

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