

## **Postoperative Instructions Lumbar Fusion**

### **Discharge from the hospital**

- Patient must have responsible adult to drive him/her home.
- Do not drive vehicle, operate hazardous equipment, make legal decisions or sign any legal documents for at least 24 hours after your procedure
- Do not drink alcohol
- Use an ice pack on your back for 15 minutes every 2 hours for the 1<sup>st</sup> 24 hours after surgery. Do not put ice directly on skin
- Call our office to make a follow-up appointment. You will need to be seen within 15 days of your procedure

### **Activity**

- Walking is encouraged. Do not sit longer than 20 minutes without getting up to walk around
- You may resume sexual activity as soon as it is comfortable
- Do not lift anything heavier than a gallon of milk.
- No bending, twisting, crawling or squatting

### **Bathing**

- You may have a light shower the day after your surgery. Leave the initial dressing in place and then remove it after showering. If you plan to take a longer shower, cover the incision with plastic wrap. You may resume normal showering activity 2 weeks after surgery

### **Diet**

- You may resume your normal diet
- With use of narcotic pain medications, constipation is common. Increase your water intake. Increasing the fiber in your diet is also recommended
- If constipation occurs, use of a stool softener or laxative may be necessary

### **Medication**

- Do not use any aspirin products or NSAID's as this can prevent bone fusion for at least 3 months after surgery
- You may resume taking all previous medications excluding NSAID's
- Take prescriptions as ordered

### **Although some discomfort is common, please call our office immediately if you:**

- Have abnormal or excessive bleeding
- Have a fever greater than 101
- Have difficulty with urination or bowel movements
- Increased /persistent redness around incision site, any drainage or odor coming from incision site
- Have new pain in a different place in the legs

### **Remember.....**

- You may experience temporary numbness or weakness in your legs
- You must wear your brace at all times unless in the shower or lying in bed
- After your first post operative appointment, we will gradually increase your activities
- Be sure and do the exercises as directed by the physical therapist
- Abstain from smoking
- It is important to gradually increase activity, if the activity causes pain then, stop

