

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

1. Wound care (also see below):
 - a. Remove dressing the morning after surgery; leave Steri – Strips if present.
 - b. Call if sign of wound infection (i.e., incision redness, foul-smelling drainage, fever, chills).
2. You may take showers but cover wound for first 2 weeks.
3. You may resume a regular diet after surgery.
4. Do not lift weight greater than a gallon of milk for 2 weeks after surgery.
5. Do not drive for first week or until comfortable.
6. You may resume work after first week following surgery if it is not physically demanding, but it is recommended that you start with half days until comfortable.
7. Call **NORTHEAST OHIO SPINE CENTER** at **330 – 966 - 9328** immediately if persistent or worsening pain, numbness, weakness, or sign of infection occurs.
8. Feel free to call at any time if questions arise about your care.
9. A gradual resumption of exercise program is encouraged, starting with walks and light aerobics.

Most Commonly Asked Questions

1. ***When can I have a bath or shower?*** You may have a light shower the day after 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 clear plastic wrap. You may resume normal showering activity 2 weeks after surgery.
2. ***When can I resume my regular exercise activities?*** Start gradually after 2 weeks and increase slowly at your own pace and comfort level. Remember, if the activity causes you pain, then stop.
3. ***Is normal to have some residual pain/numbness?*** Leg or arm pain may return intermittently after surgery. This usually resolves, but if persistent, call your physician.
4. ***When can I resume normal sexual activity?*** As soon as it is comfortable for you.
5. ***When should I return for follow-up?*** Please schedule a follow-up appointment 10 to 15 days after surgery. If you have any concerns, call without delay.
6. ***When do I remove the wound dressing?*** You can remove the dressing the morning after surgery. Please keep the Steri –Strips in place if on. Redress with a small 4 x 4 and tape. Incisions with Nylon sutures (non-absorbable) can be cleaned daily with hydrogen peroxide and with a dab of Aquaphor ointment. If no drainage is present, you may leave incision open to air. Keep Aquaphor on incision site as to not let area scab. Cover incision site with a clean dressing if going outdoors.
7. ***What complications should I be aware of?*** Please call if there is any sign of wound infection. This may present as foul-smelling drainage from the wound, redness of wound, and/or separation of skin edges.