

## Periopertative Patient Instruction Sheet

### PREOPERATIVE PREPARATION

1. Stop smoking.
2. Stop taking nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory agents such as ibuprofen.
3. Stop blood thinners (e.g., aspirin) after checking with primary care physician.
4. Stop taking narcotics the night of surgery.
5. Take no sleeping pills the night of before surgery.
6. Shower and wash hair the night before or morning of surgery.
7. Do not eat or drink after midnight on the night before surgery.
8. Drink no alcohol on the night before surgery.
9. Take only required medications (hypertensive meds, etc.) with sip of water the morning of surgery.
10. Please inform us if you have a cold, fever, infection, or new onset of condition that may increase the risk of surgery.
11. Maintain a healthy diet and exercise program before surgery.

### POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

1. Wound care:
  - 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 it 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 the [Northeast Ohio Spine Center](#) 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 Neosporin ointment.
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.