

Discharge Instructions
Lumbar Microdiscectomy and /or Lumbar Decompression
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Orthopedic Specialists Phone 314-909-1359

Patient: _____

Date: _____

- You should already have a follow-up appointment made; if not, please call the office at 314-909-1359 and ask to be seen 10-14 days following the date of your surgery. If you cannot remember your follow-up time, call the office and we can look it up for you.
- Take only short showers initially. Remove your dressing prior to the shower and re-apply a new dressing following the shower. You may pat dry the incision following the shower. You can use a large bandaid or gauze and tape to cover your wound. You should **not** sit in any bathtub, Jacuzzi or swimming pool until after your first post-op visit. Continue with your dressing until your first post-op visit.
- The incision is covered by a special skin glue. **DO NOT** apply any ointments, gels or creams to the incision. **DO NOT** scrub or rub the incision or apply soap or hydrogen peroxide to the incision. The wound does not need to be cleaned and the dressing only needs to be changed if your shower or you get your dressing wet. Moisture is what dissolves the skin glue so the more it is kept dry the better, but a quick shower is okay.
- Lifting as tolerated for the first 4 to 6 weeks following your surgery unless otherwise instructed. You can ride in a car, walk, bend over, and use stairs as your pain allows. You can sleep in whatever position is most comfortable.
- Call the office at 314-909-1359 should you develop a temperature greater than 101.5 degrees or if the wound develops redness or drainage.
- Call the office immediately should you experience any of the following: 1) weakness in your legs; 2) numbness or tingling in both legs; 3) bowel or bladder disturbances, such as loss of control or inability to go; 4) numbness or tingling around your anus or in the area of your genitals; 5) persistent headaches, especially headaches which are relieved by lying down.
- You have been given a prescription for narcotic pain pills AND ibuprofen-**TAKE THESE ONLY AS DIRECTED.** We do not refill narcotic pain medications after hours or on weekends; so **PLEASE** call during regular office hours. If you have problems with nausea from your pain medications, try taking them after eating and/or breaking them in half. If you are having poor pain control because you cannot take your pain pills secondary to problems with nausea, please call the office.
- Narcotic pain medication can cause constipation. The following medications may be purchased at the pharmacy without a prescription to aid in relief of constipation; 1) you can take Dulcolax Tablets, 1 to 2 tablets one to two times a day. 2) Instead of Dulcolax, you may use Senokot-S at 2 tablets one to two times a day. If you get diarrhea from these medications, reduce the dose. 3) If the Dulcolax or Senokot-S doesn't work, take 30 ml. of Milk of Magnesia. If problems still persist, drink ½ bottle of Magnesium Citrate and if there is still no bowel movement then finish the rest of the bottle after 2 hours. Lastly, you may use a Fleet Enema. Call the office if this protocol fails and you do not have a bowel movement within 3 days.
- It is common to feel discomfort or numbness in the back or leg that was painful prior to surgery and sometimes it takes time for these symptoms to calm down. Your back will be more sore 8 to 12 hours **after** surgery than it is when you leave the hospital because the local anesthetic placed at the time of surgery will wear off. You should have enough time to get home, get settled, eat some food and start your pain medicine. We recommend you start your Ibuprofen when you get home and your pain pills (usually Percocet, Vicodin) as your pain calls for them. If you don't have a lot of pain, you don't have to take these medications. The Ibuprofen will help keep the swelling down in your back but you should stop it if you have or develop problems with heartburn or reflux.
- In case of a question or concern after office hours that cannot wait until the office opens, the best way to contact us is to still use the same office number. This will direct you to our answering service and they will page us. Do not call the hospital or surgery center for medical questions about your surgery.

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**Lumbar Microdiscectomy/Lumbar Decompression
 Guidelines for Recovery**

The following are general guidelines for recovery; advancements in activity, work, etc., will be based on your progress at follow-up evaluations.

Criteria	Day of Surgery to initial post op visit	2-4 weeks	4-8weeks	8-12 weeks	>12 weeks
Movement	As tolerated	X	X	X	X
Care of Incision	Keep covered until 1 st post-op appointment. At home can take short 5 minute showers. Gently pat dry and cover with dry dressing.	Skin glue/tape gradually dissolves or peels off (usually around 2 weeks).No soaking in baths, hot tubs, or pools until incision is fully healed.	X	X	X
Driving	May drive when clear minded or not using medication that decreases awareness.	X	X	X	X
Imaging	X	X	X	X	X
Weight Restriction	As tolerated	As tolerated	No restrictions	No restrictions	No restrictions
Activity/Exercise	Walking as tolerated.	No restrictions.	Resume normal activity.	X	X
Physical Therapy	X	X	X	X	Physical therapy may be recommended to increase flexibility and strengthen.
Follow-up Appointments	Follow up 10-14 days following surgery.	Usually 2 weeks	X	X	X
Return to Work	May return to light duty work.	May return to light duty work.	May return to full duty 4-6 weeks out from surgery.	Full duty, no restrictions.	Full duty, no restrictions.