

## Discharge Instructions

### Anterior Cervical Total Disc Arthroplasty

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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 4-6 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.
- 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. You may start these medications immediately following surgery. 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 neck but you should stop it if you have or develop problems with heartburn or reflux. 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 neck or arm that was painful prior to surgery and sometimes it takes time for these symptoms to calm down.
- 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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### Anterior Cervical Discectomy and Total Disc Arthroplasty Guidelines for Recovery

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

Criteria	Day of Surgery to initial post-op visit	2-4 weeks	4-8weeks	8-12 weeks	>12 weeks
<b>Neck movement</b>	No brace needed. You can resume normal neck movement, but avoid hyperextension/flexion of the neck.	X	X	X	X
<b>Care of Incision</b>	Keep incision clean and dry. At home, you can take short 5 minute showers. Gently pat dry with clean towel.	Skin glue gradually dissolves. No soaking in baths, hot tubs, or pools until incision is fully healed (usually 2 weeks)	X	X	X
<b>Driving</b>	May drive when clear minded or not using medication that decreases awareness.	X	X	X	X
<b>Imaging</b>	X	X-rays taken at initial post op appointment (usually 2 weeks)	X-rays taken at 2 <sup>nd</sup> post op appointment.	X	X-rays taken at 6 month follow up appointment.
<b>Weight Restriction</b>	Lifting as tolerated. May increase as tolerated.	As tolerated.	X	X	X
<b>Activity/Exercise</b>	Begin resuming normal activity.	Resume normal activity as tolerated.	No restrictions.	No restrictions.	No restrictions.
<b>Physical Therapy</b>	X	X	X	X	X
<b>Follow up appointments</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> post op follow up 10-14 days after surgery.	x	x	10 weeks	6 months
<b>Return to Work</b>	X	May return to work full duty as tolerated.	No restrictions.	No restrictions.	No Restrictions.

\*\*You will be given a prescription at discharge for pain medication and ibuprofen. Continue Ibuprofen as directed, pain medication is as needed.\*\*