

Next Procedure Date: _____

Phone Call: _____

POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. For 24-36 hours after your procedure you should plan on sedentary to light activities. You do not have to lie in bed; however you may need frequent rest periods determined by your level of discomfort.
2. When you return home after your procedure, someone should remain with you for at least 4 hours to watch for signs of complications.
3. You may shower after your procedure, however do not take a tub bath or soak in any water for at least 4 days after your procedure. Soaking in water too soon after your procedure may cause an infection in the spine.
4. I understand that driving a car or operating any type of machinery less than twenty-four hours after general anesthesia or any sedation is **PROHIBITED**.
5. I understand that ingestion of alcohol less than twenty-four hours after general anesthesia or any sedation is also **PROHIBITED**.
6. I understand that I should not make any important decisions or sign any papers for the next twenty-four hours since anesthesia may produce mild amnesia.
7. It is very important that you monitor your pain level after your procedure, especially within the first 4-6 hours. Your physician considers the first few hours after your procedure to be critical for identifying whether or not the procedure improved your pain level and if the pain generator was located and treated. Your original pain will probably return by the evening of your procedure and you may not see the full benefit of the procedure for 7-10 days.
8. It is not uncommon for patients' pain to intensify for 3-5 days after a procedure. This is due to nerve irritation, which can occur when medications are placed around the nerve roots. This is temporary and will decrease as the medications decrease the inflammation.

DECREASING POST-OP DISCOMFORT

1. Ice packs applied to the site of your procedure work better than heat for the first 24-48 hours after the procedure. You may then alternate ice and heat as needed for pain control.
2. Often patients feel significantly better within 2 days after their procedure and decide to try to do activities they have been putting off due to their pain. The worst mistake patients can make is to participate in activities such as golf, heavy lifting, strenuous exercise, or yard work too soon. The medications need time to decrease the inflammation that was present. Also, participating in new activities or physical exertion too soon may make your pain worse or create muscle injury. We will discuss increasing your physical activity at your post-op visit.
3. If needed, you may be given a prescription for pain medication. This medication should be used as prescribed and for acute pain only. Please remember we do not phone in narcotic pain medication so it is important that you always take your medication as prescribed.

SIGNS OF COMPLICATIONS

1. **Fever greater than 101 degrees.**
2. **Redness, swelling or drainage from the procedure site.**
3. **Sudden loss of bowel or bladder control.**
4. **Paralysis or profound weakness of the arms or legs.**

If you had any sedation, we recommend that you have someone stay with you for 24 hours after a procedure.

If any of these symptoms occur contact us immediately. If you are unable to reach us then go to the nearest emergency room to be evaluated.

Should you have any questions or concerns contact us at (205) 995-9967.

Nurse signature

Patient signature

Date