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## DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS FOR ANTERIOR CERVICAL DISCECTOMY AND FUSION

It is important to me that you fully understand your postoperative instructions to fully maximize your chances of a successful recovery, minimize the risk of complications, and get back to doing the things you really enjoy! Here are the important things you most need to remember in the days to weeks after surgery.

1. **Bandage/Dressing:** You may remove the dressing over the incision 2 days after your surgery. Please be sure that you wash your hands thoroughly before and after changing the dressing, or touching your incision.

You will have Dermabond over the incision. The dermabond glue should peel off on their own 7 days after the surgery. Please remove them at that time if they have not peeled off.

2. Keep the incision area clean and dry. You may shower for 5 min beginning on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day after surgery with the incision area facing away from the shower stream. After you shower, pat the wound dry and keep it clean. Do not soak in a bathtub, hot tub, or swim until you are instructed otherwise. Do not put anything on the incision including ointments or creams.
3. If the incision area becomes red, swollen, hot, extremely tender, or if it begins to drain fluid or blood, please contact our office immediately.
4. **If you go home with your drain,** it is important that you observe the following instructions to care for your drain:
  - a. Keep the drain from being pulled or snagged.
  - b. Empty drain bulb when it is half full. Keep a running total of how much fluid you empty. Squeeze the bulb when applying the plug to maintain the vacuum. The bulb should be collapsed, not round.
  - c. Keep the drain in until it drains less than 30cc in 8 hours.

To remove the drain:

- a. Remove the gauze over the drain.
- b. Pull drain firmly and steadily until white portion is completely out.

- c. Apply a clean sterile dressing over the opening, you may need to change it daily until it is dry or it seals over.

If you have questions or concerns, about your drain, call our office @ (541) 686-3791.

5. **Exercise/Restrictions:** Your only exercise during the first week following your surgery should be leisurely walking. This should be on ground level only; no hiking. Walk 2-3 times a day (10-15 min) on level ground followed by a 3-5 minute rest. You may walk up and down stairs if needed. Do not perform exercises until you are authorized to do them by my office or physical therapist. Do not do any physical activities or contact sports unless specifically authorized to do so by me. During the first three months after surgery you should limit lifting to 5-10 pounds. Any increase in your lifting limit should be authorized by me.
6. You can expect some mild swelling in your neck in the first week or two after surgery. This can cause you to feel the sensation that you have something stuck in your throat, or that you have difficulty swallowing. Using a straw for beverages is helpful. Avoid 'chewy' foods like, steak, or breads for the first 2-3 weeks if swallowing is affected. You can use some ice on the incision area to decrease the swelling. Protect your skin with a towel over the incision. Ice for up to 15 minutes, every 1-2 hours as needed.
7. **Driving:** No driving for 4 weeks or during continued use of pain medication. You may find that driving for over 15-20 minutes at a time will cause increase in back pain in that first few weeks after surgery. This should gradually improve over time.
8. **Collar:** Wear your hard collar during the day when you are up and about. Wear it when you are riding in a car. You do not need to wear it when laying down, sleeping or sitting down and watching tv.
8. Do not return to work without approval from me.
9. **Common Symptoms:** You can expect to have some neck pain until the fusion is solid, this can last up to 4-6 weeks after surgery. You may also have some arm pain as well. This should also go away within a few weeks. If you have muscle weakness or numbness in the arms or hands, this can take longer to go away- sometimes several months.
12. **Medication:** Your medications are prescribed to you to be taken "as needed". This means that if you are not experiencing any significant pain, you need not take any. You are not placing yourself in any danger by not taking these medication. On the other hand, if you feel you are significantly uncomfortable, please do not exceed the directions on the bottle unless specifically directed. Most pain medications have Tylenol (Acetaminophen) in them. Do not take any additional Tylenol or generic acetaminophen, as too much may harm your liver.
13. **Medication Refills:** If you require medication refills, please call the office during business hours which are between 8:00-5:00 Monday through Friday or call your

pharmacy. Please note that we normally have a 48 hour turnaround. Also note that we are unable to refill any medications on Friday, weekends or holidays.

If you live outside of Eugene, some post op pain medication such as Tylox or Percocet, require a written prescription. These medications cannot be called in to your pharmacy. These will require us to mail the prescription to you, so allow extra time for refills.

14. Do NOT smoke or inhale any second hand smoke- to do so increase your risk of fusion failure!! Also there is evidence that anti-inflammatories such as Ibuprofen and Naproxen can interfere with the fusion process, so do not take any type of this medication without first contacting us.
15. **PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE: If you have any signs of infection (fever, chills, extreme soreness, redness, or drainage of the incision. If you have significantly increased pain not relived by your pain medications, difficulty walking, and difficulty passing your urine or moving your bowels.**

If you have any other questions or concerns not covered in these instructions, please feel free to call the office at 541.686.3791.

**ASPIRIN MUST BE STOPPED 14 DAYS PRIOR TO YOUR PROCEDURE.**

To My Patients Who Will Undergo a Cervical or Lumbar Fusion:

**Medical studies have shown that the family of medicines known as “Nonsteroidals” or anti-inflammatories (NSAIDS) may increase bleeding at surgical sites, and affect your body’s ability to fuse the bony area of the spine where your surgery was performed.** If fusion does not take, you may require other surgical procedures. **These medications include both prescription and over-the-counter types.** We ask that you not take any of the medicines listed below **two weeks** before your surgery and until we tell you that your neck or back has successfully fused (90 days minimum) after surgery. In addition, do not take any weight reduction medications. Please call our office if you have any questions.

<b><u>Brand Name</u></b>	<b><u>Generics</u></b>	<b><u>Over the Counter</u></b>
Anaprox	celecoxib	Advil
Anaprox DS	diclofenac	Aleve
Ansaid	diflunisal	Alka Selzer
Arthrotec	etodolac	Anacin
Bextra	fexicam	Arthritis Pain Formula
Cataflam	flurbiprofen	Arthritis Strength
Celebrex	ibuprofen	Bufferin
Clinoril	ketoprofen	BC tablets & powder
Daypro	nabumetone	Carisoprodol Compound
Dolobid	naproxen	Cama Arthritis tablets
Feldene	mefanamic acid	CoAdvil
Fiorgesic tablets	meloxicam	Damson-P
Indocin	misoprostol	Dia-Gesic Improved
Lodine	oxaprozin	Doan’s Pills
Lodine XL	piroxicam	Easprin
Mobic	refecoxib	Ecotrin
Motrin	sulindac	Emparin
Naprelan	tolmetin	Eqagesic tabs
Naprosyn	valdecoxib	Excedrin
Norgesic	oruvail	4-way Cold tablets
Orudis	ketorolac	Gelprin Tablets
Percodan		Midol
Ponstel		Nuprin
Relafen		Pepto-Bismal
Tolectin		Persistin
Tolectin DS		Roxiprin
Toradol		Zoprin
Vioxx		
Voltaren		
Voltaren-XR		

