
Scoliosis Fusion Discharge Instructions

Patient: _____

Procedure: _____

First Follow-Up Appointment: _____ / _____ / _____

Time: _____ : _____ a.m. p.m.

Appointment Location: _____

Pain and Pain Medications:

- You will be provided prescription(s) for the oral pain medication that works for you, which may be obtained on the way home from the hospital.
- Your pain medication may contain an ingredient called acetaminophen or APAP. That is the generic name for Tylenol. Do not exceed 4,000 mg of acetaminophen in a 24-hour period. Excessive use of Tylenol can cause liver damage.
- After your surgery, **do not take non-steroidal medications**, such as, Motrin, Aleve, ibuprofen, Relafen, Indocin and Naprosyn for three months, unless approved by your physician. These medications inhibit bone fusion healing.

Wound Care:

- Leave your dressings on for the first 72 hours (three days after surgery).
- You will likely have two sutures, one at the top and one at the base of incision; those will be removed at your first post-op visit.
- Skin glue is used in addition to sutures. This will dissolve on its own over two to three weeks.
- Do not apply any ointments, peroxide or betadine to the incision. Keep incision dry and clean.
- **Call the office if your incision becomes red, begins to drain, becomes more painful or if you develop a fever that is greater than 101.5° Fahrenheit.**

Bathing:

- You may shower four days after surgery. Keeping incision away from the full force of the stream, pat the incision dry and then let it air dry.
- No tub bathing, hot tubs or swimming for six weeks.

Nutrition: Drink a can of Boost or Ensure nutritional supplement between each meal until you are back to eating three regular, nutritious meals per day. Proteins are the building blocks of healing. (Do not drink with meals, it is too filling.)

Constipation: This can occur with the use of Narcotics. Using over the counter Miralax, Milk of Magnesia or Dulcolax may be used to help this. Also, increasing your activity (walking) and fluid intake will help.

Exercise: Walking is the most important type of exercise for you. Walk short amounts each day and try to reach the goals listed on the next page. Take frequent breaks as needed. Physical therapy may be prescribed for later in your recovery.

Initial Activity at Home:

- No bending, twisting, stooping or lifting over five to ten pounds for at least eight weeks after surgery.
- **First week:** Walk short amounts in the house every 10 to 15 minutes. Stairs are okay with help.
- **Second week:** Repeat first week but outside, weather permitting.
- **Third week:** Walk up to a half mile per day, divided doses.
- **Fourth week:** Walk up to one mile per day, divided doses.
- **Third month:** Work up to three miles per day.
- No driving for the first two weeks and must be off narcotic pain medications before driving.
- Use good body mechanics (always bend with your knees to lift or to pick something up from the floor).

Follow-up: Your first post-op appointment will be about two weeks after surgery; however, if you have concerns prior to this date, please call the office. The tiny suture knots at each end of your incision will be painlessly removed and X-rays will be taken. Subsequent follow-up appointment intervals will be based on how you are progressing.

Students:

- You may request a second set of textbooks from your school to keep at home to avoid carrying too much weight in your book bag.
- Please refrain from contact sports that involve the risk of falling or being pushed.
- My office staff can provide the necessary paperwork for your school administrators or teachers.

Return-to-Work: Status is determined on each individual's progress, depending on the type of work you do and depending on the baseline of your health and activity level prior to the surgery. In general, you may expect to be off for the first two weeks following your surgery. You may then qualify for light duty sit-down work depending on your progress. It may take three to six months before you can return to physically demanding work, such as construction or heavy lifting. **You should not drive a car, operate heavy machinery or make important decisions while you are still taking narcotic medications.**

What you can do to increase your chances of a successful outcome:

- Aerobic exercises
- Weight loss (If indicated)
- Smoking cessation

Call our office 317.802.2000 if you develop any of the following:

- Leg swelling or calf pain.
- Fever, chills, redness around or drainage from your incision.
- Increasing back pain or numbness and tingling not relieved by rest and pain medication.