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**DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS AFTER LUMBAR LAMINOTOMY AND DISCECTOMY**

1. **FOLLOW UP:** Please call the office as soon as possible to arrange your next appointment. This will be scheduled approximately one month after the surgery date. If there are any questions or problems within the first month, please call our office so we may assist you promptly. In three months you will have an appointment where we will obtain x-ray's, to further evaluate your progress.
2. **WOUND CARE:** You have a water-proof dressing. You may shower with it. If the dressing gets wet, remove and replace it, along with drying the wound. Keep fingers and hands off the wound. Avoid baths, hot tubs, or swimming pools for two weeks. Keep the wound dressed for about two weeks. Insure your belt and clothes do not irritating the wound. If you notice any advancing red zone, pus or other concerns please telephone the office promptly.
3. **MEDICATIONS:** Continue the medications that you were taking, prior to surgery with four additions:
  - Ice. Although this is not a medication, use it frequently on your low back. This will be very helpful for the first week.I will prescribe:
  - Anti-inflammatory medication.
  - Muscle relaxant. This will be taken daily until you are seen in one month. This is for achy pain in the neck and can be taken on an as needed basis. If you do not like this, do not continue to take it.
  - Narcotic. This can be taken as needed for pain. The goal is not to be completely pain-free. It is important to achieve a balance between pain management and over-sedation from the narcotics. Most people discontinue narcotics after one week. There are side effects with narcotics which include drowsiness, sleepiness, itchiness, and difficulty with sexual activity. Do not use or handle sharp instruments while on narcotics.

**Do not drive after you take a narcotic** and while you are under the influence of narcotics. It is illegal to drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

3. **ACTIVITY RESTRICTION:** You can walk to your hearts content based upon your low back pain level. It is better to do multiple short walks than one long one. The idea is not to walk to fatigue but instead multiple short walks. You can bend and stoop slowly and carefully. When you do this, put your hands on your hips and slowly walk down and then extend back up. You may rotate and go side-to-side but go very slowly in a controlled fashion. It is good to do this very carefully for the next month. In one month, we will be giving you more formal exercises to increase the range of motion of your back. You can lift up to 15 pounds for the next month. However, keep the weight close to your body. Sitting is highly variable. Many patients do not like sitting however many do. If it feels good it is probably okay but once your back starts feeling stiff, get up and walk around. Your future activity restrictions will be determined at your follow up appointment in one month.