

Lake of the Woods District Hospital
Discharge Instructions Following Orthopedic Surgery
Spinal Decompression

1. DAY OF SURGERY (24 hours)

Effects of Anesthesia

The effects of the drugs that you were given during or after your surgery can last for up to 24 hours. The side effects of these drugs can alter your short-term memory, judgement, motor skills and response time.

Have a responsible adult take you home and remain with you for the rest of the day and overnight.

In the 24 hours after your surgery, **do not:**

- Drink any alcohol
- Take any pills that will make you feel sleepy. Check with your doctor if you are unsure.
- Drive a car, use machinery, power tools or appliances
- Make major decisions or sign legal papers.

2. ACTIVITY

- Rest today, then resume your usual activities as you can tolerate.
- Avoid lifting more than 10 pounds
- Avoid excessive bending, twisting, or sustained slouching for six weeks
- Avoid driving until you feel comfortable
- Your doctor will advise you when you can return to work

3. DIET

- You may feel some nausea. Eat and drink whatever you can tolerate.
- Resume your usual diet when you feel ready.
- Avoid alcohol while taking pain medications.
- Avoid constipation by increasing fiber in your diet (fruits, vegetables, whole grains and cereals)
- Drink 6-8 glasses of water each day.

4. HYGIENE

- You may sponge bath at any time.
- Avoid hot tubs and swimming until the incision has healed.
- Other: _____

5. PAIN

- Follow pain prescriptions as prescribed by the doctor.

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6. CARE OF THE INCISION

a. Wound Care

- Wash your hands before and after touching the incision or dressing
- Remove the dressing in 7 days
- After the dressing is off shower, and pat dry with a clean, dry towel
- Steri-strips on your incision will fall off on their own, if not remove them in on day 10 post operation
- You may have a small amount of clear/pink/ red fluid coming from your incision during the first 24 hours after surgery
- If you continue to have fresh drainage reapply a new waterproof, breathable dressing (Mepilex), that was given to you by the nurse. Keep this dressing on for an additional 7 days.

b. Suture/Staple Removal

- Will be done at your surgeon's follow up appointment 2 weeks after your surgery (including telemedicine appointments).
- Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre will contact you with your follow up appointment date and time.
- If you have not been contacted with your follow up appointment information, call (807) 684-6363 to inquire.

7. SELF MONITORING

- Use your **SeamlessMD app** for all questions
- Call your doctor if you have the following:
 - ✓ Chills or fever over 38°C or 101°F by mouth
 - ✓ Increased bleeding, swelling, tenderness, redness, or foul odour from your incision
 - ✓ Vomiting that does not go away
 - ✓ Trouble or burning when passing urine
 - ✓ Increased pain not relieved by pain pills
 - ✓ Severe headache
- Call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Department if you have the following:
 - ✓ Severe chest pain, or shortness of breath
 - ✓ Pain, swelling, or redness of your legs

Did your doctor tell you that you have developed an infection related to your surgery?

If YES, please call the LWDH Infection Prevention Control office
(807) 468-9861 extension 2362.

Thank you for helping us ensure quality care.