

## Discharge Instructions after Arthroscopic Microdiscectomy

### First two weeks:

1. For the first week after the surgery, you can gradually increase activity. I want you to do as much walking exercises as possible. It is better to stand and walk than to sit or lay down. When you rest, it is better to lie down on bed or couch.
2. Have someone change the dressing on the second day after the surgery. Wash hands before and after the dressing change. Steri-strips will be covering the wound. **DO NOT REMOVE THE STERI-STRIPS.** Put new sterile gauze over the steri-strips then apply the clear sticky dressing over the gauze. Keep the sticky dressing above the buttocks but low enough to securely cover and hold the gauze.
3. You can shower on the third day after the surgery. Keep the dressing from the previous day in place. The clear dressing is water-tight. Take quick shower (5 minutes) without bending back or legs too much. After drying-off, remove old dressing and apply new gauze and sticky dressing. Wait two days (the fifth day after surgery) before the next shower and next dressing change. So you can shower every other day after the first one, change dressing right after the shower. Keep this schedule until you return to see me in the office.
4. For the first week, no driving or riding in a car unless there is an emergency, except to go home from hospital and to come to my office.
5. During the second week, increase the walking. The back soreness should be much better so you can position more comfortably. You can ride in a car for short trips only, 10-15 minutes. No driving yet.

### First three weeks:

6. Avoid sitting for more than one hour at a time. Get up, stretch your back and legs for at least 30 minutes, then sit again.
7. Wear corset when out of bed.
8. **No sexual relations.**
9. No hottubs or tub bath.
10. No bending, twisting, or lifting objects over ten pounds.

### Signs and Symptoms to Watch for:

12. Any increase in swelling or redness around the wound.
13. Any cloudy, foul-smelling, or reddish drainage from the wound.
14. Any new numbness, tingling, or weakness in the leg, foot, or toes.
15. Any temperature over 100 degrees >.

If any of these conditions occur or if you have any question, contact my office at: 708-799-2911 or 219-836-4955. Explain you just had surgery and you want to speak to me or my nurse Joann.

Miscellaneous:

16. Some pain in the back and leg is expected. Usually the back pain is worse the first two days, then it gradually goes down. The leg pain should be mild and usually is noticeably better than before surgery. Depending on your condition, some decreasing sensation may last since sensation nerve fibers are the most delicate and vulnerable to damage. Some occasional tinges of pain may occur in the back or leg which does not last long during the first three to six weeks after the surgery.
17. Do not do any exercise program right after surgery unless prescribed by me. Depending on your condition, you may or may not need physical therapy after the surgery.
18. As you heal and recover, your activity restrictions will gradually lessen. Do not try to do too much within the first few weeks of surgery. When appropriate, we will discuss your return to work and if restrictions are needed.
19. As the surgical pain decreases, I recommend you cut down the use of pain pills. These medications have side-effects and are meant only for short-term use. Usually the pain decreases enough by fifth day after surgery so that no narcotic pain medication is necessary.

If you have any question or problem, please call my office: 708-799-2911 or 219-836-4955.