



Scott Spann, M.D.

Joseph Hagen, PA-C

POST OP INSTRUCTIONS: ANTERIOR CERVICAL DISCECTOMY AND FUSION

ACTIVITY:

- Do not lift, push, or pull over 5 pounds for two weeks following surgery.
- Avoid overhead activities.
- Wear the cervical collar at all times for the first 10 days following surgery.
- Avoid driving until cleared by Dr. Spann or Joseph Hagen, PA-C at the post-operative visit.
- Sleeping in a recliner chair may be more comfortable than a bed initially.

POST-OPERATIVE PAIN:

- Incisional pain is normal.
- Intermittent shoulder pain, arm pain, numbness or tingling is not uncommon depending on the severity of nerve compression pre-operatively. When pressure is taken off of the nerve structures, nerve regeneration and recovery can begin and can occur at a slow rate.
- You may experience temporary pain in the back of your neck, which is often due to stretching of the ligamentum flavum when disc height is restored.
- You may experience throat soreness or difficulty swallowing for 1-2 weeks following surgery. This is temporary, and soft foods may be preferred during this time.
- Narcotic pain medication is prescribed for up to one month post-operatively. As the pain diminishes, Extra Strength Tylenol can be taken in place of the prescription narcotic pain medication. **Do not use anti-inflammatory medication for pain during the first 6 weeks post-operatively.** (ie: Advil, Ibuprofen) Anti-inflammatory medication can delay bone consolidation.

WOUND CARE:

- Contact our office if there are problems with the bandage / dressing.
- The surgical dressing should not be changed until the post-operative office visit with Dr. Spann or Joseph Hagen, PA-C.
- The dressing and incision must remain clean and dry, and should not come in contact with water, lotions, or other moisturizer creams until the dressing is removed at the first post-operative appointment.
- Staples will be removed at your post-operative appointment in the office.

JUST A REMINDER:

- Take an over the counter stool softener as needed for constipation. This can be a side effect of narcotic pain medication.