



Discharge Instructions for Lumbar Fusion Surgery
(Anterior, Posterior, and Anterior/Posterior)

1. Check port sites twice daily for the following: Green/yellow discharge, increased redness and/or tenderness at incision site, opening of the incision, flu-like symptoms, temperature above 101.5 *if any of the above should occur, please contact your physician's office.
2. Your bandages should be removed 24 to 36 hours after leaving the hospital, as long as there is no continued drainage from the wound.
3. Your drain may be removed prior to discharge. If not, should be removed within 24 hours of surgery, when less than 20cc in an 8 hour period is collected. If drainage is significant beyond the 24 hour mark please contact the office for further guidance.
4. You may shower as normal once the bandages are removed from your incisions. If they are not removed before your discharge from the hospital, you may remove those 36-48 hours after leaving the hospital as long as there is no continued drainage from your wound. Hair washing is permissible while in the shower. Please refrain from using bathtubs, hot tubs or whirlpools until seen in the office and advised otherwise. It is recommended that a shower chair be used for the first few weeks to ensure your safety.
5. The incisions should be cleaned gently using regular soap and water. Do NOT use heavily perfumed soaps. RUB GENTLY or pat dry! Do NOT place any ointments or lotions over the incision.
6. You should NOT drive at least until seen in the office for your postoperative visit. You may be a passenger for short distances (20-30 minutes). If you must travel for a longer period, be sure to make several stops so that you can stretch your legs. Reclining the passenger seat will be the most comfortable position for you, especially if needing to travel for longer distances.
7. Do not initially sit in one position for periods longer than 20-30 minutes. You may increase this time as you become more comfortable.
8. DO NOT DO THE FOLLOWING:
 - Lift anything greater than 15-20 lbs (a gallon of milk in each hand is about 15 lbs).
 - Bend below the level of your knees, or twist at the waist.
9. DO walk as much as possible. Stairs are good for you, but take it slow and use the handrail. You may also use a treadmill. No running. If you were discharged using a walker and/or cane, you may stop using these assistive devices once you feel safe and comfortable.

10. If your incisions have sutures or staples, they may be removed 2-3 weeks following your surgery at post op appointment with the doctor's office.

11. Do not take any type of anti-inflammatory medication for 10 weeks or until advised otherwise (i.e. Aspirin, Motrin, Aleve, Advil, Ibuprofen, Indocin, Celebrex, Vioxx, etc.). These medications inhibit the development of a solid fusion. Extra-Strength Tylenol is okay as are the dismissal pain medications given to you. Wean down to Extra-Strength Tylenol as soon as you are able.

12. **No smoking/chewing tobacco or any products containing nicotine including vapes!** These products drastically decrease the chance of a solid fusion and proper healing.

13. Call **208.732.0067** to make/ confirm an appointment with Dr. Christensen's office for approximately 1 week after your surgery date, or if there are any questions/concerns. On weekends and evenings, call Cassia Regional Hospital at 208.677.4444 or Madison Memorial Hospital at 208.359.6900 and ask for Dr. Christensen to be paged.

I HAVE RECEIVED AND UNDERSTAND THESE INSTRUCTIONS

Patient Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Instructed by: _____ **Date:** _____