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**POSTOP CARE AFTER - LUMBAR ARTIFICIAL DISC SURGERY**

*WOUND*

- There are typically dissolving sutures and no removal is required. Any paper tapes on the wound will fall off in the shower
- You can shower but keep the wound dry (i.e. not soaking)
- Do not swim for at least 3 months
- Do not put any creams on the wound
- Do not get the wound wet
- Do not take baths for 4 weeks
- For the first week after surgery, after every shower, pat the wound dry

*EXERCISES*

- The best exercise is walking. Small amounts frequently are best
- Follow the guidelines given to you by the physical therapist in hospital

*POSTURE*

- AVOID EXTENSION!
- Try and keep the back straight
- Don't lift or twist or hyperextend
- Keep mobile- change positions frequently
- Wear your corset/brace when out of bed for the first 6 weeks after surgery

*DRIVING*

- Do not drive for at least 2 weeks after surgery
- When driving take a 15 minute break for every 45 minutes of driving

*RETURN TO WORK*

- You can return to a desk job 1-2 weeks after surgery. Don't sit for prolonged periods of time.
- See your neurosurgeon before returning to a physical occupation

*PAIN RELIEF*

- Tylenol (#1,2 or 3), Percocet or Vicodin can be taken for wound pain after surgery
- If there was pain in the arm or leg prior to surgery, It is not uncommon to get twinges of pain for up to a month after surgery
- Numbness is very slow to recover and there may always be some residual numbness
- Pins and needles are not uncommon after surgery but should settle over time
- You will need to take an anti-inflammatories (e.g. Voltaren, Mobic etc.) for the first month after surgery

*FOLLOW-UP*

- You will need to see your neurosurgeon or his PA 2 weeks after surgery
- You will need regular follow-up with X-rays

*WHAT TO WATCH FOR*

- If the wound becomes excessively red, swollen or painful or develops a discharge, or you have questions, contact your neurosurgeon at his office or see your GP.
- If it is an emergency and you cannot contact anyone come to the Emergency Room