

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Your Spinal Surgery:

1. What do I need to bring on the day of surgery?

- *You will be contacted by the nurse navigator prior to your surgery and also meet with the preoperative nurse a few days before the surgery and they will advise you as to what you will need to bring with you to the hospital*

2. What is the estimated length of time for the surgery?

- *Surgery varies between one and a half to six hours or more. It is dependent on what actually needs to be done.*

3. How long will I be in the hospital?

- *Length of stay depends on the type of surgery. Most patients are discharged home the day after surgery. There are some patients that require a longer hospital stay, ranging from two to five days. It is all patient specific, please discuss this with the nurse navigator who will be available to answer all of your questions.*

4. Will my pain be gone once I wake up from surgery?

- *Remember that you have had the problem for some time. It will take time for the pain to be relieved, meaning several weeks or months.*

5. How do I take care of my surgical incision?

- *Do not put any type of cream or ointment on your incision. It may cause problems with how the incision heals.*
- *Do not put alcohol or hydrogen peroxide on your incision as it can delay healing and/or increase the size of the scar.*
- *You may shower and wash your hair 48 hours after the surgery unless told not to by the neurosurgeon. Be sure to dry the area thoroughly.*
- *Do not soak in a bath tub or jacuzzi for the first two months without first asking your neurosurgeon*

6. When can I return to work?

- *It takes an average of six to twelve weeks for full recovery from the surgery. Depending on the nature of your work, you may go back to work as early as 14 days after surgery. Please discuss with our providers at your post op appointment.*

7. When can I continue my activities?

- *Walking daily is a good exercise. Progress your walking on a daily basis. Do not go for long walks without someone going with you for the first few times. This is to ensure that should you become tired, someone is with you to help you get home safely.*
- *No heavy lifting, bending, pushing, pulling, or climbing on ladders or stools. Lift only with both hands and not more than 10 pounds for the first two weeks, gradually increasing this over the next several weeks.*
- *Sexual relations may be resumed, but positions that cause discomfort, neck or back strain should be avoided.*

- *Depending on the type of procedure you had done, you will be able to drive anywhere from two to four weeks on average. You may drive when you have recovered full coordination, are completely off all narcotic pain medications and are experiencing minimal pain. Ask your neurosurgeon or APP provider after the surgery is over to get this clarified. Patients wearing a neck brace may not drive until provider has removed collar.*
- **Neck Surgery**
 - *You may need to wear a neck brace for approximately six to eight weeks. Get clearance from the neurosurgeon or APP provider before you stop wearing it.*
 - *Avoid contact sports or strenuous activities for approximately six months. Get clearance from the neurosurgeon before starting.*
- **Back Surgery**
 - *Depending on the type of procedure you had done, you may need to wear a back brace for approximately three months. Get clearance from the neurosurgeon before you stop wearing it.*
 - *Avoid strenuous activities for approximately four to six weeks. Get clearance from the neurosurgeon before resuming.*
 - *Avoid contact sports for approximately eight weeks. Get clarification from the neurosurgeon before resuming.*

8. When do I call my neurosurgeon?

- *Temperature greater than 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit taken by mouth.*
- *Swelling, redness, or drainage around the incision site.*
- *Neck surgery: watch for severe difficulty swallowing, numbness, tingling, pain, or weakness to your neck, shoulders, arms, and/or hands.*
- *Back surgery: watch for new symptoms of numbness, tingling, pain, or weakness to your back, legs, or feet.*

9. When do I return to clinic for a follow-up appointment?

- *Make a Telehealth post-operative appointment with our Physician Assistant four weeks after your surgery (if you do not have a follow-up appointment yet).*
- *If you have sutures or staples, then you will need to return within seven to fourteen days from the date of your surgery for them to be removed, please call our office to schedule an appointment.*

10. How do I apply for temporary disability?

We ONLY give temporary total disability to patients who have recently undergone surgery.

- **State Disability (EDD)**- *If you will be filing a State disability claim, please visit www.edd.ca.gov/Disability to file your claim online and complete necessary forms electronically. There is a fee of \$40 for the completion of each disability form. It is the patient's responsibility to call our office with their receipt number once the claim has been submitted. Please allow 7-10 business days for completion*
- **FMLA and Other Disability forms**: *We have chosen to partner with MediCopy, an MRO company, to assist with completion of these forms. To speak with a MediCopy representative regarding submission or status of these forms, please call 866-587-6274*

11. How do I apply for a temporary handicapped parking placard?

- *Patients will need to visit the DMV website at www.dmv.ca.gov to print out the form. Patients must complete their portion and deliver both pages to our office. We will complete the form giving the patient a temporary handicapped placard for up to 6 months. We will call the patient once the form is complete so that they may file with the DMV*

*** Please Allow 7-10 Business days for the completion of any forms****