



Illinois Spine Institute Cervical Surgery Post-Operative Information

(847) 303-1200

The following should be considered general instructions, and may be different for each individual patient. Please note, your physician may instruct you otherwise.

What to expect the day of surgery:

Before your surgery you will be visited by the anesthesia staff. You will be taken back to the operating room where anesthesia will be administered. This process can take up to one hour, before the surgery will begin.

Following the surgery you will be taken to the recovery room. The staff will work to make you comfortable, and once stable will transfer you to your room or discharged home. Most patients are discharged the following day.

Incision care and dressings:

You will have a small incision covered a dressing. The incision will have dissolvable sutures below the skin, and possibly skin glue applied over the top. There may be 2 small sutures outside of the skin that looks like small clear fishing line – these will be removed in clinic. Keep the incision clean and dry for the first 3 days. You may shower after 3 days – clean the incision with soap and water and pat dry with a clean towel. You may leave the wound open after 3 days.

What to expect following surgery:

The feeling of a “lump” in your throat and a sore throat are normal following surgery, as are neck and upper shoulder pain. There may be some difficulty swallowing and we advise eating food with soft consistency at first. Once the pressure is off the nerve(s) in your neck, your arm pain, numbness /tingling and strength should improve, though this may take some time. Usually the pain improves first, the strength improves second, and the numbness/tingling may take some time, and possibly some symptoms may not completely resolve. Return to work is variable and depends on the type of work you perform.

Medication:

You will be prescribed medication prior to discharge. Take medications needed according to the directions. Resume your normal pre-operation medication when you return home, unless advised otherwise.

****Our physicians advise you to avoid taking any Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication after surgery, as this may interfere with the healing process. Please do not resume these medications until your physician clears you to use such (examples include Advil/Motrin (ibuprofen), Aleve (naproxen), Celebrex, and/or Aspirin, Mobic (meloxicam), diclofenac).**

What to watch for:

***Call our office immediately if you have any of these symptoms.**

- Neck swelling, difficulty swallowing or difficulty breathing / shortness of breath
- Fever and or chills
- Redness or warmth around the incision site
- Changes in strength or sensation to your arms and/or legs
- Loss of bowel or bladder control or inability to urinate – **please call 911 and go to the emergency room immediately.**

If there are any questions or concerns, please feel free to call our office.

*Thank you for choosing the Illinois Spine Institute
Your choice for comprehensive Spinal Care*