



(847) 519-9700

Illinois Spine Institute

Lumbar Fusion Post-Operative Information

What to expect following surgery

Muscle spasms and back pain are expected after your surgery. Once the pressure is taken of the nerve(s), your leg pain, numbness / tingling, and weakness should improve. Usually the pain improves first, then the weakness, followed by the numbness / tingling. The back pain and spasms usually improve over the following 2-3 weeks – physical therapy may be started at this time to help.

A follow-up appointment should be made to see the doctor approximately two weeks following surgery. It is best if these are scheduled prior to the surgery.

Following surgery, you should arrange to rest for the first week. Avoid lifting, bending/twisting, etc. One of the best exercises is to walk at least 3 times a day for at least 30 minutes each time. This will help to strengthen your back muscles and eliminate pain and spasms.

Return to work is variable and depends on the type of work you perform and the surgical procedure. The doctor will discuss this with you after your operation.

****Avoid taking any Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication after surgery for at least 3 months (examples include Advil/Motrin (ibuprofen), Aleve (naproxen), Celebrex, and/or Aspirin).**

Incision care and dressings

The dressing should be changed after 1-2 days, or if it becomes wet or has discharge. To change the dressing remove the tape and gauze. You may shower using antibacterial soap, dry and apply a sterile dressing over the incision and apply a new layer of tape on top. Change the dressing daily and use ice for short periods of time over the surgical site.

Medication

You will be given medication prior to discharge. There will be one medication for muscle spasm, and one for pain. Take both as needed according to the directions. Resume your pre-operation medication when you return home, with the exception of medicine for pain and muscle spasm. Please consult your doctor if you take blood thinners and when to resume such.

What to watch for

- Fever and or chills
 - Redness, warmth or discharge from the incision site
 - Changes in strength or sensation to your arms and or legs
 - Loss of bowel or bladder control or inability to urinate
- *Call our office immediately if you have any of these symptoms***

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