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## Discharge Instructions Anterior Cervical Fusion

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*Neurosurgery*

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Medications:** Take any medications only as directed.

- Taking acetaminophen (Tylenol) is acceptable, but avoid ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil), Naproxen (Naprosyn) and Indomethacin (Indocin) for three months.
- If you experience constipation while taking a narcotic pain reliever, begin using an over-the-counter laxative right away.
- Use a muscle relaxant to prevent muscle spasms or severe muscle tightness.

**Diet:**

- Resume whatever diet you were on before surgery (e.g., unrestricted, diabetic, low sodium, etc.)
- You may find that softer foods or thick liquids are easier to swallow initially after surgery, but swallowing should become progressively easier.

**Activity:**

- If a collar has been ordered for you, wear it at all times except for when shaving or bathing. When the collar is off, keep your head in the same position as if the collar were still applied.
- Avoid lifting overhead.
- Avoid pushing/pulling and lifting over 15 lbs.
- Walking is a good exercise. Go for at least four short walks a day, even if inside your home.
- You may remove your Ted Hose stockings once you are consistently walking four times a day.
- Do not drive while still required to wear the collar or if you have had any pain medication within four hours. If you are not required to wear a collar, you may drive after 3 days depending on your pain medication use. You may ride in a car as a passenger as much as tolerated.

**Wound Care:**

- Call the office if you have drainage from your wound, separation of wound edges, or increased pain, redness or swelling.
- Call the office if you have an elevated temperature (101 F or greater).
- You may shower at any time, but do not soak the incision in a tub or pool for 10 days after surgery. Dry the incision by blotting, not rubbing.
- You do not need to keep a dressing on the wound.
- Leave the steri-strips on for 10 days after surgery. If their edges curl up, you may trim carefully with scissors. If they fall off early, don't worry. Re-absorbable sutures are beneath the skin edges and will continue to support the incision while it heals.

**X-Rays:**

- You will need to have X-rays done within a few days before your four-week follow-up appointment.
- These can be done at the hospital or at your primary doctor's office (if they have x-ray equipment).
- Please bring the x-rays with you to your follow-up appointment UNLESS they were done at Holland Hospital. (We can access their x-rays via a secure internet link).

**Follow-Up:** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ With:

- David W. Lowry, MD
- Adam Kremer, MD
- Scott M. Tuinstra, PA-C
- Jefferson Alferink, PA-C