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Discharge Instructions Thoracic Laminectomy or Discectomy

Name: _____

David W. Lowry, MD, PC
Scott M. Tuinstra, PA-C, MS
Neurosurgery

Medications:

- Take any medications only as directed.
- If you experience constipation while taking a narcotic pain reliever, begin using an over-the-counter laxative.
- Use a muscle relaxant to prevent muscle spasms or severe muscle tightness.
- If you were taking Aspirin or Plavix prior to surgery, you may resume these medications on the third day after the procedure, unless directed otherwise by your physician.

Diet:

- Resume whatever diet you were on before surgery (e.g., unrestricted, diabetic, low sodium, etc.)

Activity:

- Avoid pushing/pulling and lifting over 15 lbs. for four weeks.
- From now on, even when lifting light weights, bend with your knees and not your back.
- 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.
- Sitting will not harm your back, but will likely be uncomfortable for several weeks following surgery. Standing or lying down is generally better tolerated.
- Provided that the above restrictions are observed, you may engage in other activities, including sexual intercourse, that do not result in worsened pain either at the time of activity or the following morning.
- Do not drive if you cannot comfortably turn your head side to side or if you have had any pain medication within four hours. You may ride in a car as a passenger as much as you tolerate.

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.
- If you have steri-strips on, leave them 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.
- If you have sutures or staples visible over the skin, please contact the office to schedule an appointment for their removal approximately ten days after surgery.

Follow-up: Date: _____ Time: _____ With: _____ David W. Lowry, MD
_____ Scott M. Tuinstra, PA-C