



(847) 303-1200

Illinois Spine Institute

Lumbar Decompression Post-Operative Information

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 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, the strength improves second, and the numbness/tingling may take some time, and possibly some symptoms may not completely resolve.

A follow-up appointment should be made to see the doctor approximately 10-14 days following surgery. It is best if these are scheduled prior to the surgery.

Following surgery you should arrange to relax for the first week. Avoid lifting, bending/twisting, etc to help decrease the chance of recurrence of the disc herniation. 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. The doctor will discuss this with you after your operation.

Incision care and dressings

You will have a small incision covered by a dressing. The incision will have dissolvable sutures below the skin, and may have skin glue applied over the top. There may be 2 small sutures outside of the skin that looks like small clear fishing line –if so, these will be removed in clinic. You may shower initially as long as the incision is covered by a waterproof dressing, but do not get the incision wet for three days. You may shower after 3 days – clean the incision with soap and water and pat dry with a clean towel. You may cover the wound with a simple Band-Aid and change daily.

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.

What to watch for:

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

- Drainage from the wound
- 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*