



(847) 519-9700

Illinois Spine Institute Cervical Discectomy and Fusion Post-Operative Information

What to expect the day of surgery:

Before your surgery you will be visited by the doctor as well as the anesthesia staff. You will be taken back to the operating room where anesthesia will be administered, and you will be prepped for surgery. 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. Depending on the type of surgery – you will either be transferred to same-day surgery or admitted for observation overnight. You will have a small dressing covered with a band aid which will cover the incision.

Incision care and dressings:

Your incision will be covered by a band aid. The incision will have dissolvable sutures below the skin, and possibly skin glue applied over the top. You may remove the dressing the following day after surgery and shower using antibacterial soap and water, dry off with a clean towel and replace the band aid if necessary.

Medication:

You will be given medication prior to discharge. There likely 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 but discuss with your surgeon regarding resuming blood thinners.

****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).**

Activity / Sleep

Following surgery, it is helpful to sleep and rest with your head elevated to aid with swelling. If possible, rest and sleep for 2-3 days in a recliner chair with the head elevated to at least 30 degrees to aid with swelling. We recommend that you are up and walking as much as possible post-op, though avoid any heavy lifting.

What to expect following surgery:

The feeling of a “lump” in your throat and a sore throat are normal following surgery, as is neck and upper shoulder pain. 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 will not completely resolve. Return to work is variable and depends on the type of work you perform.

What to watch for:

- Neck swelling, difficulty swallowing or breathing
 - 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
- *Call 911 then 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**