



(847) 519-9700

Illinois Spine Institute

Lumbar Decompression 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 few days. 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 at your follow-up appointment.

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. You may remove the dressing the next morning and shower with antibacterial soap and dry. Replace the band aid daily for a few days and apply ice for a short time to the area over the first few days.

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. Please consult with your doctor if you are taking blood thinners and when it is safe 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 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