



POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS:

Cervical disc replacement or anterior cervical discectomy and fusion:

Instructions:

- You can remove the top layer of the dressing on post-operative day 2.
- Keep the bottom layer of steri strips in place until your first post-op visit.
- You may take a short shower on post-operative day 1 but no bathing/swimming.
- Call our office and schedule your first post-op visit and X-Rays.
- You can move your neck in a gentle range of motion just don't force it.
- You can restart your usual home medications the day after surgery.
- If you are taking the Medrol dose pak, do not also take another anti-inflammatory.
- Apply an ice pack to the incision area for 20 minutes every few hours for 3-5 days.
- If you were discharged with a neck brace you can remove it when you get home.
- You can restart exercise at 2 weeks but keep the upper body weights very light.
- ***If you have neck swelling and difficulty breathing, call 911 immediately.***

Expectations:

- You will have a sore throat for the first several days.
- You may have some trouble swallowing solid food for the first few weeks, a soft liquid diet such as smoothies, yogurts, soups is recommended.
- You will probably have pain in the back of the neck and shoulders for several weeks.
- On average 75% of the pain is gone after 6 weeks and 95% is gone after 3 months but this varies among people.
- You may have some fluctuating nerve pain and numbness in the first few months.
- You should not have new weakness, if you do, let us know.
- A low-grade fever is normal during the first week and this is not worrisome for an infection.
- Wound drainage is not normal, please inform us if this occurs.

