



PLAS T. JAMES, M.D.

DIPLOMATE OF THE AMERICAN BOARD OF ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

CERVICAL POST-OPERATIVE PROTOCOL

1. Do not smoke or chew tobacco products, which could greatly decrease your chance of a successful surgery and/or fusion.
2. **Anterior Fusion**-Keep cervical (neck) collar off as much as possible during the day. If patient's neck becomes fatigued or head becomes heavy, collar should be placed back on. Patient should work on right and left (side-to-side) rotation immediately after surgery. (It is okay to nod head, however, NO up and down FORCED motion until six weeks postoperative).
Posterior Fusion- Keep cervical (neck) collar on until your first post op visit. NO side to side, or up and down motion until post op visit.
3. At bedtime, wear neck collar or use *Contoured Tempurpedic* brand pillow.
4. No lifting heavier than a gallon of milk or 10 pounds (keep object close to body).
5. Aquacel dressing should remain on until first postop visit. The Aquacel dressing can be worn without issue in the shower. If the bandage becomes saturated or comes off, please contact the office for further instruction.
6. **DO NOT BECOME CONSTIPATED!!** Use stool softeners, prune juice, etc.
7. No driving or flying until after first post-op visit at approximately 10-14 days.
DO NOT DRIVE with neck collar on. Must be able to fully rotate neck from left to right before driving.
8. Women who use a hairdresser must lean forward over sink to have their hair washed.

Saint Joseph's Doctors Center

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9. Patient may experience difficulty swallowing and posterior neck/shoulder blade soreness for a few days in the postoperative period. You may apply ice/cold pack on surgical site or shoulder blades 20 minutes at a time. NO HEAT.
10. Wear compression stockings until first post-op visit.
11. Avoid overhead or over-the-shoulder height work.
12. **MEDICATIONS:** Continue all antibiotics until all have been taken per the Pharmacy. For the first three (3) months, do not take anti-inflammatory medication such as Ibuprofen, Advil, Aleve, Lodine, Voltaren, Celebrex, Aspirin, and Zipsor (diclofenac) as it decreases bone growth (SEE LIST).

*Post-op medication, i.e., narcotics, cannot be phoned into the pharmacy. The prescription MUST be picked up in person or mailed.
13. Make sure that if you use a computer that the screen is at eye level. Must have elbows supported by chair armrest. Also, must have palm pad to rest hand on while typing.
14. Call Doctor if temperature rises greater than 101.5 or chills.
15. Notify Doctor if wound(s) develops purulence (pus), excessive redness, clear drainage, foul odor, or severe postsurgical headaches.
16. CALL FOR FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT IMMEDIATELY AFTER DISCHARGE FROM HOSPITAL TO BE SCHEDULED APPROXIMATELY 14 DAYS POSTOP.