



PLAS T. JAMES, M.D.

DIPLOMATE OF THE AMERICAN BOARD OF ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

LUMBAR POSTOPERATIVE PROTOCOL

1. Do not smoke or chew tobacco products, which could greatly decrease your chance of a successful surgery and/or fusion.
2. No bending, lifting, or twisting. (No lifting greater than 10 pounds, i.e., gallon of milk) for the first 6 weeks post-operatively.
3. You may sit as often as you like but not longer than 30 minutes at a time in an upright 90-degree chair. Take 10-minute breaks to stand, walk, or lie down.
(Please find a chair with lumbar support/armrest and not very low to the ground).
4. Normal household walking. Limit stairs.
5. Exercise: Walk ten (10) minutes a day for first week. Twenty (20) minutes a day for the second week. Thirty (30) minutes a day for the third week. This should be on level ground, i.e., track, mall walking. (THIS IS IN ADDITION TO HOUSEHOLD WALKING).
6. Wear brace when walking any longer other than going to the restroom and returning. However, you do NOT have to wear brace when sitting on a chair with a back support.
7. **DO NOT BECOME CONSTIPATED!!** Use stool softeners, prune juice, etc. If no bowel movement after being home for 24 hours, use a laxative of choice (one bottle of magnesium citrate or Milk of Magnesia. Use Colace 100 mg by mouth twice a day). Can also supplement with Miralax and Citrucel. Drink plenty of water.

Saint Joseph's Doctors Center

5667 Peachtree Dunwoody Road, Suite 220 • Atlanta, GA 30342 • (404) 252-2422 • (404) 252-6223 fax



PLAS T. JAMES, M.D.

DIPLOMATE OF THE AMERICAN BOARD OF ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

LUMBAR POSTOPERATIVE PROTOCOL (continued)

8. Patient may shower over dressings only if they have on Aquacel dressing or a clear plastic-water resistant dressing (i.e., op-site dressing).
9. No soaking - Coordinate showers with Home Health visits if possible.
10. 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.
11. Wear compression stockings until re-check in office.
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, Celebrex, Aspirin, Lodine, Voltaren, 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. No flying or driving until re-check in the office. Patient may drive without back brace if the car has a lumbar support. Please wear a seatbelt including shoulder harness and lap belt.
14. Limit time in the car to 30-45 minutes if possible and break trip up if necessary.
15. You can apply ice/cold pack to the surgical site for 20 minutes at a time. **NO HEAT!**



PLAS T. JAMES, M.D.

DIPLOMATE OF THE AMERICAN BOARD OF ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

LUMBAR POSTOPERATIVE PROTOCOL (continued)

16. Call the Doctor if temperature rises greater than 101.5 degrees F or chills.
17. Notify the Doctor if wound(s) develops purulence (pus), excessive redness, clear drainage, foul odor, or severe postsurgical headaches.
18. CALL FOR FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT IMMEDIATELY AFTER DISCHARGE FROM HOSPITAL TO BE SCHEDULED APPROXIMATELY 14 DAYS POSTOP.