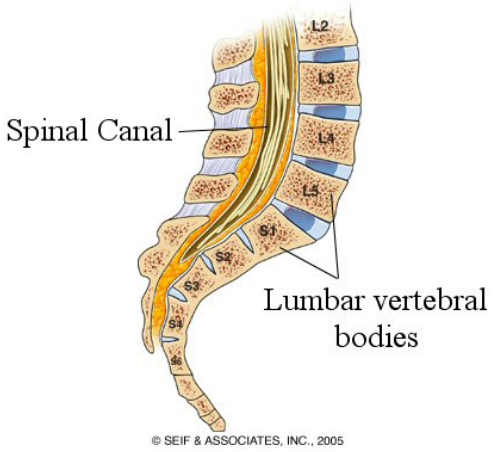
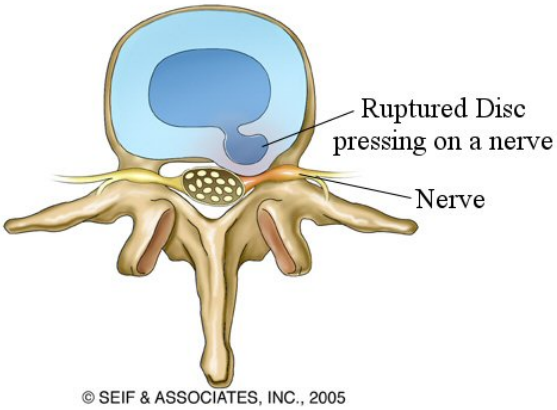
Laminectomy - Laminotomy - Discectomy, Care After Surgery

Please read the instructions outlined below. Refer to these instructions for the next few weeks. These discharge instructions provide you with general information on caring for yourself after surgery. Your doctor may also give you specific instructions. While your treatment has been planned according to the most current medical practices available, unavoidable complications occasionally occur. If you have any problems or questions after discharge, please call your caregiver.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS





- Check the cut (incision) made by the surgeon twice a day for signs of infection. Some signs may include a foul smelling, greenish or yellowish discharge from the wound; increased pain, or increased redness over, the operative (incision) site; an opening of the incision; flu-like symptoms (problems); or a temperature above 101.5° F (38.6° C).
- Change your bandages in about 24 to 36 hours following surgery or as directed.
- You may shower once the bandage is removed or as directed. Avoid bathtubs, swimming pools/hot tubs for three weeks or until your incision has healed completely. If you have sutures (stitches) or staples they may be removed 2 to 3 weeks after surgery, or as directed by your caregiver. A visiting nurse, your family doctor, or returning to the hospital may be how this is done.
- Follow your doctor's instructions as to activities, exercises, and physical therapy.
- Weight reduction may be beneficial if you are overweight.
- Walking is permitted. You may use a treadmill without an incline. Cut down on activities if you have discomfort. You may also go up and down stairs as tolerated.
- **DO NOT** lift anything heavier than 10 to 15 lbs. Avoid bending or twisting at the waist. Always bend your knees.
- Maintain strength and range of motion as instructed.
- No driving is permitted for 2 to 3 weeks, or as directed by your doctor. You may be a passenger for 20 to 30 minute trips. Lying back in the passenger seat may be more comfortable for you.
- Limit your sitting to 20 to 30 minute intervals. You should lie down or walk in between sitting periods. There are no limitations for sitting in a recliner chair.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- An exercise routine is helpful to prevent return of problems when recovery is complete.

SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- There is increased bleeding from the wound.
- You notice redness, swelling, or increasing pain in the wound.
- Pus is coming from wound.
- You have chills or fever or an unexplained oral temperature above 102º F (38.9º C) develops.
- You notice a foul smell coming from the wound or dressing.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You develop a rash.
- You develop any reaction or side effects to medications given.
- You develop bleeding or drainage from the wound following surgery.
- You develop dizzy episodes or fainting while standing or develop shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.
- You develop loss of bowel or bladder control.
- You develop weakness or cannot use your legs.

Document Released: 03/26/2009
ExitCare® Patient Information ©2011 ExitCare, LLC.