# Lumbar Laminectomy
# & Anterior Cervical Fusion

Anterior cervical discectomy is surgery done on the upper spine to relieve pressure on one or more nerve roots, or on the spinal cord. There are 7 bones in your neck, called the cervical spine. These 7 bones (*vertebrae*) sit one on top of the other. Cushions (*intervertebral discs*) separate the vertebrae and act like shock absorbers. As we age, degeneration of our bones, joints, and disks can cause neck pain and tightening around the spinal cord and nerve roots.

- You have been discharged from the hospital with medicines that may include:
  - Pain pills.
  - Muscle relaxants.
  - Vitamins.
  - Sleeping pills.
- It may be necessary to take these over a one or two month period.
- Muscle spasms may occur following lumbar or cervical surgery. Most patients are able to treat them effectively with:
  - Prescribed medicine.
  - Activity limits.
  - Heat and cold application.
- Have your pharmacy call the doctor's office for renewal of prescriptions if necessary.

## ACTIVITY

- You should refrain from riding in or driving a car for three weeks until your post operative visit with the doctor.
- You may walk inside and outside your home. Avoid uneven surfaces, steps and inclines.
- Do not bend, stoop or lift.
- Lumbar laminectomy patients should avoid sitting except for very short time periods until your caregiver's follow-up appointment.
- Further activity instructions will be provided at your follow-up visit.

## WOUND CARE

- You may shower with plastic wrap taped over your wound for one week after your surgery date. You will be taught this in the hospital. Resume normal showering after this period.
- The skin adhesive strips on your incision will gradually come off on their own, or you may remove them after 7 to ten days.
- Two weeks after your surgery, you may begin putting vitamin E oil, cream or aloe vera gel on your wound.
- Call your caregiver if you notice swelling, redness or increased pain around the wound.

## PHYSICAL THERAPY

- Exercising is not recommended in the first month postoperatively.
- Cold packs may relieve some of the discomfort following surgery.
- Following Anterior Cervical Fusion, wear the cervical collar at all times until your follow-up appointment.
- A progressive exercise program will begin following your first follow-up appointment to increase range of motion in your back and neck.

## SEEK MEDICAL CARE WHEN:

- You need to schedule your post-operative follow-up appointment.
- You experience a fall, have progressive weaknesses or numbness, or increased pain.
- You have any questions concerning your postoperative care.

Document Released: 08/01/2005 Document Re-Released: 03/14/2011

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