

[Patient->First Name] [Patient->Last Name]

Dr Goss Post-Operative Instructions after surgery

Pain control after surgery –

-Feel free to take any over the counter medication you desire, to help with pain control. Ibuprofen, Tylenol, Aleve, Advil/Motrin, etc. – these are all commonly used for pain control.

-Feel free to use ice packs or heating pads. For most patients immediately after surgery, ice packs are preferred to heating pads. But whatever temperature ‘feels best’ is ok. Do what you feel your body requires, in that moment.

-For most procedures, in addition to over the counter medication, you may take an oral narcotic. We can send this in to your pharmacy, and will do so for most surgeries. Please take as instructed. Narcotics are NOT necessary for prolonged periods of time. The DEA will only allow a 7 day supply of narcotics. We commonly use oxycodone for a few days, and then transition to tramadol as needed. It’s always best to minimize narcotic use, so take these medications sparingly, and move away from them (and to only over the counter medications) when able.

-Anti spasm medications (Flexeril, Zanaflex, Robaxin) are sometimes needed. Please discuss with us if you feel you require these. Most procedures don’t require these medications.

-Gabapentin(Neurontin)/Pregabalin(Lyrica): These medications are commonly used for ‘nerve pain’. If needed, these will be prescribed, in addition, or instead of, some of the medications listed above.

Remember, many prescription medications, along with a decrease in activity, commonly lead to constipation. To avoid this, drink plenty of fluids, and consider a mild laxative if needed.

Wound Care:

1. You may shower with the waterproof dressing in place. The waterproof dressing may be removed after **72 hours**, but if the waterproof dressing is intact, and not bothersome, it may stay on for up to 7 - 10 days. Once the original dressing is removed, if there is ongoing wound drainage, please cover your wound with gauze and tape (can be secured at any pharmacy), unless in the shower (at which time the gauze and tape should be removed). Mild drainage of the wound for a few days after surgery is common, and should slowly taper off within 1 or 2 weeks.

2. Do not put any cream, lotions or vitamins on the incision, unless instructed by your surgical team.

3. Report any increasing redness, bright red bloody discharge, persistent oozing or smell from the wound. If you develop fevers, chills, worsening draining from your wound, progressive weakness or numbness in your lower extremities, difficulty voiding or have unrelenting pain despite medication, please contact us.

757 547-5145 ext 1 (office phone)

757 286-9664 (cell phone) This number is available to you Monday thru Friday, 8am – 4:30pm. You can text a photo of your wound for us to evaluate, but please include your name and dob when you send us a text.

Activity / Restrictions after Surgery (Cervical Spine Procedures):

1. Your incision cannot be submerged in water until it is COMPLETELY healed (usually a month). During that period of time, no pools, hot tubs, submersion in bathtub, oceans, lakes, rivers, etc.
2. Avoid sitting for longer than 30 minutes at a time. Keep moving!
3. You will be wearing a cervical collar/brace, when outdoors and in a car, for 30 days. As such, NO DRIVING for 30 days. Riding in the car as a passenger is fine at anytime.
4. You may take walks inside or outside of your home. Indeed, walking is the primary form of exercise that you're allowed to do, for 30 days after surgery. Walk as much as you desire! You may walk up and down stairs without restriction.
5. You are to avoid housework, yard work, snow shoveling, lifting more than a few pounds or any strenuous activity. Do not begin any exercise program or sports program until you are instructed to do so. Typically these restrictions are for 30 days post op.
6. If you smoke, remember that smoking impairs healing of bone and thus slows the rate of your recovery, possibly leading to poor results. Smoking cessation will not only help you heal but will improve your general health.
7. Your cervical collar/brace, in most instances, is to be worn for 30 days. You may take it off to sleep, shower, tend to personal hygiene, eat, lounge on couch/recliner, etc. Essentially you will wear your collar anytime you are on the move for any period of time (light chores in your home), and at all times outside of your home.

Activity / Restrictions after Surgery (ThoracoLumbar Spine Procedures):

1. Your incision cannot be submerged in water until it is COMPLETELY healed (usually a month). During that period of time, no pools, hot tubs, submersion in bathtub, oceans, lakes, rivers, etc.
2. Avoid sitting for longer than approximately 30-minute periods. Keep moving!
3. Following surgery, you may find that your reaction times are slow because of pain, generalized fatigue, stress of surgery, and prescribed pain medication. You may ride in a car anytime and may find it more comfortable in a reclined position or in the back seat. If you are planning to take a long trip, please try to take interval breaks, every 45 minutes, getting out of the car and walking short distances. Regarding driving, in general terms you may start driving (short distances) when you are no longer distracted by the pain from surgery, and no longer distracted by pain medication. Essentially, when you feel you have progressed in your recovery where you are now a 'safe driver' you may resume driving.
4. You may take walks inside or outside of your home. Indeed, walking is your main form of exercise that you're allowed to do, for 30 days after surgery. Walk as much as you desire! You may walk up and down stairs without restrictions.
5. You are to avoid housework, yard work, snow shoveling, lifting more than a few pounds or any strenuous activity. Do not begin any exercise program or sports program until you are instructed to do so.
6. If you smoke, remember that smoking impairs healing of bone and thus slows the rate of your recovery, possibly leading to poor results. Smoking cessation will not only help you heal but will improve your general health.
7. If you received a thoracolumbar brace for your procedure, think of your brace as a 'winter coat'. Wear the brace when you desire. Remove the brace when you desire. Same as your winter coat. The brace is intended for

support and can be worn prior to surgery and after surgery. As your core muscle strength improves over time, you will naturally require your brace less and less.

Patient's Signature _____ Date: _____

PREPARING YOUR SKIN FOR SURGERY

**DO NOT shave your face, underarms, legs or any part of your surgical site at least 48 hours surgery. If needed, the hospital will take care of that.*

NIGHT BEFORE YOUR SURGERY

**No smoking after midnight. Smoking should be reduced a few days prior to surgery.*

**DO NOT eat or drink anything after midnight before your surgery. This includes gum, mints, or hard candy.*

COMING TO THE HOSPITAL

**Wear loose fitting comfortable clothes on the day of surgery.*

**Remove ALL jewelry, including all body piercings and leave at home.*

**DO NOT bring in your luggage, leave it in the car.*

**DO NOT wear makeup, nail polish, deodorant, body lotion, aftershave or contact lenses the day of surgery. If you wear glasses, bring your glass case with you.*

**Bring any advance directives or power of attorney paperwork with you.*

**Bring your pictured ID and insurance card with you the day of surgery.*

DAY OF SURGERY

**On the day of your surgery, arrive at the time given to you by your surgery scheduler. Please check in at the first-floor registration desk.*

**DO NOT put anything in your mouth the morning of surgery ie... gum, mints, or hard candy.*

**You may brush your teeth the morning of surgery, however, DO NOT swallow any water.*

**If you are having outpatient surgery (leaving right after surgery), you must have a responsible adult driver bring you to the hospital. They must wait in the surgery waiting area and provide you with transportation home. You may NOT drive yourself home. It is advisable that someone stay with you for the first 24 hours following your procedure.*

**If the lab gives you a blue blood ID band, DO NOT THROW IT AWAY. Bring it with you on the day of surgery.*

**If you have sleep apnea and use a CPAP, BiPAP, and/or Bi-Flex machine, take it to the hospital with you on the day of surgery.*

MEDICATIONS

**STOP ALL vitamins and herbal medications 2 weeks prior to surgery.*

**If you are a diabetic, hold oral diabetic medication the night before and the morning of surgery. Hold all insulin just the morning of surgery.*

**If you have asthma and use inhalers, bring them to the hospital on the day of surgery.*