



Neurosurgical Associates of Southwestern CT

BRAIN & SPINE SPECIALISTS

Post-Operative Instructions - Brain Surgery

The following is a list of instructions for your convalescence, following your brain surgery. These represent general instructions to be used as guidelines. They may be modified for an individual patient.

1. The surgical procedure you had was performed in conjunction with another surgeon or physician assistant. Post-operative questions can be addressed with either provider. This team approach leads to better patient care and outcome.
2. Call the office to schedule an appointment for staple removal 10-14 days after your surgery.
3. If you have a worsening headaches, drowsiness, or new weakness on one side, or your family notices a dramatic change in your behavior or alertness, call our office immediately or go to the Emergency Room.
4. If you are taking Dilantin, Keppra or other medications to prevent seizures, be sure not to miss any doses and do not let your prescription run out.
5. If you are having a headache and need more pain medication, please be sure to call our office during business hours on Monday through Friday 9am through 5pm. Prescription renewal by phone may require 48 hours.
6. Driving and return to work will be discussed at the first post-operative visit.
7. Lie only on a bed with your head elevated on at least 2 pillows. No sofas or recliners. Sit only in a straight back chair (such as a dining room or kitchen chair).
8. No bending, stooping, pushing, lifting or straining. Lift only with one arm at a time & only a weight that you can easily manage. Get up from a lying down position by turning first on one side or the other. **DO NOT PUSH BACKWARDS WITH YOUR HEAD & NECK** to adjust your position in bed. Turn on your side to do this.
9. You may shower and wash your hair 5 days post-operatively. The first day is the day after surgery. Wash your hair and the incision area gently using baby shampoo.
10. **DO NOT** use a hair dryer after washing your hair and do not brush your hair away from the incision since this will put strain on the suture line. Gently towel dry hair.

11. Begin walking in the house and progress to outdoors. Take someone with you the first few times until you are quite confident of your abilities. Slowly increase the distance each day so that you will be walking 1mile/day by your 2nd post-operative week, 2 miles/day at 3 weeks post-operative. These are GUIDELINES, NOT RULES.
12. Do not drink alcoholic beverages post-operatively. You may be given anticonvulsant medication to reduce the risk of seizures (epilepsy). Make certain that you understand the medication instructions that you are given and follow those instructions faithfully.
13. Medications may include pain relievers and analgesics to control pain, although they may cause drowsiness and constipation. They may also be habit forming and you may want to consider the amount of pain medication you are taking. You may also consider taking multivitamins with iron on a daily basis for a few weeks post-operatively.
14. Constipation is a common side effect of some pain medications so it is important to drink plenty of liquids and eat a diet high in fiber. You may need to take a stool softener for a short time while taking pain medication, but avoid strong laxatives. Consider Milk of Magnesia, Metamucil, Fibercon, Citrucel or other mild laxatives.
15. Report any increase in post-operative pain, fever, chills, drainage, swelling of the wound or any redness of the wound immediately to our office. If there is drainage, note the color, amount and consistency. Also call us if you are having headaches. Do not hesitate to call if you have any questions.
16. Please call the office if you are in need of any prescription refills. Be sure to call during business hours on Monday through Friday from 9am to 5pm. Prescription renewal by phone may require 48 hours to refill. Please be aware that prescriptions for narcotics will not be provided by a covering (on-call) surgeon
17. Each individual situation is different and therefore requires individualized attention. Feel free to ask questions during your office visits. Write down your questions before you come into the office so you don't forget anything.