

# Cervical Spine

## Post Operative Care (Inpatient)

### *Patient Information Booklet*

#### **What to expect after your surgery?**

1. Pain – It is normal to experience some pain initially. Do take the prescribed pain medicine or use the patient-controlled analgesia.
2. Physiotherapy – The physiotherapist will attend to you upon doctor's referral. You will be assisted to mobilise out of bed and do short distance walking.
3. Collar/brace – You may be required to wear your collar/brace for \_\_\_\_\_ weeks/months. Please keep to the duration indicated by your surgeon.
4. Outpatient Physiotherapy as referred by your surgeon / physiotherapist
  - 2 – 4 weeks or
  - After 6 weeks

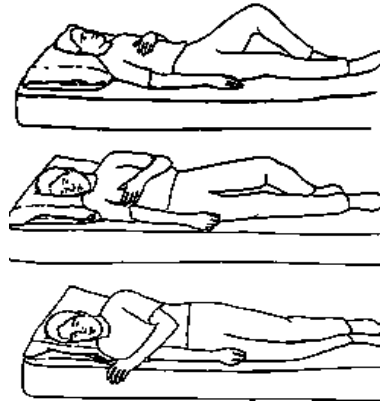
#### **Patient Centered Goal:**

I want to be able to \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

## Immediate Post-Operative Care

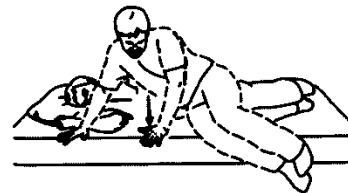
### 1. Turning and getting up from bed:

- a) Bend your knees.
- b) Reach your arm across your body and roll onto your side.
- c) Bring your legs over the edge of the bed and at the same time push yourself into a sitting position.



### 2. Getting into bed:

Do the above steps in reverse order. Sit on the edge of the bed and slowly lower yourself down onto your side. Lift up your legs at the same time.



### 3. Walking / Sitting out:

Moving early, as allowed by your surgeon, reduces post-operative complications and enhances your recovery.



### 4. Remove soft collar/brace when eating, showering or at rest



### 5. Pacing of activities

## Exercises

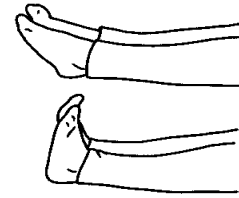
### **Deep breathing exercise**

Take a deep breath in through your nose and feel your lower chest expand outwards. Hold for 3 seconds and blow out slowly. Repeat 10 times every hour.



### **Ankle pumps**

Point your toes up towards your face and then point downwards to the edge of bed. Repeat 10 times every hour.



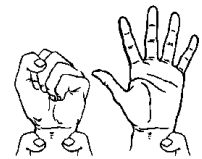
### **Heel slides**

Gently move your leg up and down the bed. Repeat 10 times for each leg.



### **Shoulder rolls and hand pumps**

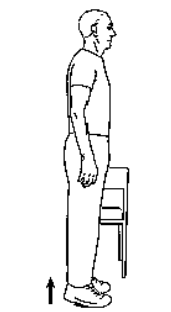
- Shoulder rolls - Slowly rotate your shoulders forwards, making big circles. Repeat the movement backwards, 10 times for each set.



- Hand pumps – Clench your fist and open up your fingers repeatedly for 10 times.

### **Standing bilateral heel raises**

Stand with hands supported on a stable surface. Keep your back straight and gently raise both heels. Repeat 5 – 10 times.



**It is recommended that you perform these exercises as indicated\* by your physiotherapist following his/her assessment.**

These exercises should not aggravate your neck or back pain.

## Post-operative Advice

The following instructions are general and may vary depending on your condition. Do check with your surgeon or physiotherapist should you have any questions.

Activity	General Advice
<b>Twisting</b>	No twisting or excessive movement of your neck for the first 4–6 weeks. Functional range <b>for comfort within collar</b> is allowed. Laundry: Avoid bending over to wash or hang clothes.
<b>Lifting</b>	No carrying of more than 5kg of load for the first 4 – 6 weeks. Carry items closer to body.
<b>Sitting</b>	Start with 20 minutes and gradually increase sitting time. Regular movement is recommended i.e. every 30-40 minutes.
<b>Walking*</b>	Start with a short distance and progress outdoor over the weeks. <u>A general guide:</u> 0 – 2 weeks: 5 – 10 minutes as tolerated, 3 – 5 times daily 3 – 4 weeks: 10 – 20 minutes as tolerated, 3 – 5 times daily
<b>Cycling</b>	Start with 10 minutes on a stationary bike after 2 weeks. Gradually increase the duration. Stop if there is any increase in symptoms.
<b>Driving</b>	0 – 2 weeks: No driving 2 – 4 weeks: Drive only for short journeys *Check with your doctor before resuming driving.
<b>Return to work – Deskbound</b>	Usually after 2 – 4 weeks. Avoid sitting for prolonged durations. Keep to 30 – 45 minutes of sitting. Stand and walk around from time to time.
<b>Return to work – Physical</b>	Usually after 8 – 12 weeks. This may vary depending on your job nature. Do check with your surgeon.
<b>Return to sport</b>	Depending on the type of sport, please consult your surgeon or physiotherapist regarding the time frame.

## When to be concerned?

Please inform your doctor if you experience any of the following:

- Changes in bowel and urinary continence
- Severe reduction in arm or leg strength
- Persistent fever
- Bleeding / Oozing from wound