

ANTERIOR CERVICAL FUSION QUESTIONS YOU MAY ASK CONCERNING YOUR SURGICAL PROCEDURE

1) How long of a hospital stay can I expect?

ANSWER: One to two days is the usual length of stay.

2) Will I need a neck collar or brace?

ANSWER: Yes, for the first two (2) to three (3) weeks.

3) What is the approximate time it will take for me to recuperate?

ANSWER: Six (6) to eight (8) weeks

4) How long before I can return to work?

ANSWER: Two to twelve weeks depending on the type of work.

5) How long before I can drive a car?

ANSWER: Approximately six weeks until collar is off and you are not taking narcotics.

6) How should I take care of my surgical incision?

ANSWER: You must keep the wound clean and dry. Be sure to call your doctor if you have any fever, redness or drainage form the wound. Sutures dissolve in about 28 days beneath the skin. We allow the steri-strips (paper tapes) to fall off as you are allowed to shower.

7) When can I walk?

ANSWER: We will have you up and walking on the first postoperative day.

8) Will I require the use of a walking cane?

ANSWER: No. This will depend on you and how well your strength and balance were before surgery.

9) Will I need therapy after surgery?

ANSWER: Yes. This will begin in the hospital. Therapy will be prescribed at your first postoperative visit.

10) How long will my sutures stay in place?

ANSWER: The sutures will dissolve on their own.

11) Will I be able to have sexual relations after surgery?

ANSWER: Yes. However, we request that you wait approximately two weeks and use a dependent position.

12) How long before I can fly on a plane?

ANSWER: You can fly in a plane as soon as you are discharged from the hospital.

13) How long before I can take a bath or shower at home?

ANSWER: Seven days after surgery. Prior to this you may take sponge baths to maintain personal hygiene. Keep the incision dry for the first week.

14) Do I need to be on a stool softener?

ANSWER: This is not necessary unless constipation develops while in the hospital or if you have problems with constipation prior to surgery. Medications may cause constipation. If this occurs, you will be prescribed a bowel program.

15) Is it alright to sleep on a waterbed?

ANSWER: Yes. Just be sure to follow any movement precautions, which are given to you at the time of discharge from the hospital.

16) Will I be able to walk up and down stairs?

ANSWER: Yes.

17) When may I go swimming?

ANSWER: When your wound has healed.