

TEXAS NEURO SPINE INSTITUTE, P.A.

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Post Operative Instructions for Cervical Spine Surgery

- 1) Change dressing daily with gauze and tape. The dressing does not need to be air tight. The hospital will provide dressings. If you run out of dressings, you can buy more at CVS or Walgreens.
 - a. If you have steri strips, then change dressing daily for 5 days. After the fifth day, you no longer need dressing changes since the steri strips are covering the incision.
 - b. If you have staples, please continue to change the dressing daily until your first post op visit.
 - c. The drain site might continue to drain for several days after it is removed, this is normal. If your dressing becomes wet, it is ok to change the dressing more than once per day.
- 2) Do not get the incision wet until day 5 after the surgery. When you get ready to take a shower, take the dressing off, run water over the incision(no soap/ointments/creams), then blot the incision dry and place a new dressing if needed(see above).
- 3) Wear your cervical collar at all times. You need to wear the cervical collar 24 hours a day for 6 weeks. You will be provided a shower collar. You can wash the pads on the cervical collar by putting them in the washing machine and letting them air dry. While washing the pads please wear the shower collar.
 - a. If you are given a soft foam collar then you do not need a collar for the shower.
- 4) No driving for 6 weeks after the surgery. Do not drive while taking narcotic pain medications.
- 5) You need an appointment for 2 weeks after the surgery. If you do not already have one, please call the office.
- 6) You are encouraged to walk throughout the day. We recommended walking 15-20 minutes every couple of hours throughout the day. If you are not able to walk frequently, then use the incentive spirometer provided by the hospital throughout the day.
- 7) Do not take NSAIDs for 3 months after the surgery as this delays the healing process. Smoking also delays the healing process.
- 8) Call the office(214-393-5007) immediately if you:
 - a. Have a fever greater than 101
 - b. Notice drainage from the incision site
 - c. Notice redness around the incision site
 - d. Develop significant weakness/numbness not present before the surgery