

## Post-Surgery Care Thoracolumbar Fusion

- **Wound Care**

- The incision is covered with a glue and sealant dressing.
- The tegaderm can be removed on the first day after surgery. After that, no dressings are needed.
- You may start showering on the 5th day after leaving the hospital. The glue and sealant dressing are a water-tight barrier.

- **Post-Surgery Pain**

- Pain after surgery is normal. You may have some return of your pre-surgery symptoms and this is normal. Overall your pain should slowly decrease. You may have good and bad days.
- The pain medication Oxycontin should be taken twice a day, and Percocet may be taken every 4-6 hours as needed for pain.
- The nerve medication (Gabapentin) should be taken twice a day to decrease pain.
- The muscle relaxer (Baclofen) should be taken 1-3 times daily as needed for muscle spasm.
- The stool softener (Colace) should be taken 3 times a day to prevent constipation.
- You must not take any anti-inflammatory pain medications for 3-6 months after surgery as these can prevent spinal fusion. These medications include advil, motrin, ibuprofen, aleve, Celebrex, meloxicam, voltaren, and diclofenac.

- **Post-Surgery Activity**

- Wear the brace when out of bed and not during bathing.
  - There are activity restrictions for 4 weeks after surgery: 1) No bending past 90 degrees. 2) No heavy lifting more than 10lbs. 3) No twisting.
  - Gentle home physical therapy will start within one week after surgery.
  - You may return to work when your pain is controlled and you are able to follow the above activity restrictions. Disability forms should be sent to Dr. Fischer's office.
- Please call Dr. Fischer's office or proceed to the nearest ER for severe pain, fever (temp >100.4), wound drainage or any other concerning symptoms.
  - Please call Dr. Fischer's office with any questions.