**AFTER YOUR LUMBAR SPINE SURGERY: NEXT STEPS**

### Afternoon of Surgery
- **Pain Medicine**: You will be given IV pain medicine or pain medicine by mouth.
- **Activity**: Complete your coughing and deep breathing exercises the way your nurses showed you. Get out of bed and sit in a chair for 1 meal. Walk the hall with your nurse or OT.
- **Diet**: Drink water and clear liquids, if you are not feeling nauseous or bloated.
- **Discharge Plan**: Communicate with your homesupport and set up your ride home.

### Day after Surgery
- **Pain Medicine**: Take pain medicine by mouth at least 30 minutes before starting any activity.
- **Activity**: Complete your physical therapy (PT) and occupational therapy (OT) evaluations. Sit in a chair for all meals and walk the halls.
- **Diet**: Eat healthy foods that are high in fiber and drink plenty of water and clear liquids.
- **Discharge Plan**: Start planning your needs to go home. Your care team will review your discharge instructions, such as:
  - Wound care
  - Pain medicine
  - Bracing

### Two Days after Surgery
- **Pain Medicine**: Take pain, as prescribed.
- **Activity**: Sit in a chair for all meals and walk the halls. Continue to work with PT and OT. Walk the hall at least 4 times today.
- **Diet**: Eat foods high in fiber and drink plenty of water and clear liquids.
- **Discharge Plan**: Talk to your care team about when you can expect to leave. Finalize your plan to go home.

### At Home
- **Pain Medicine**: Take pain, as directed. Call our office when you are down to a 2-3 day supply of medicine. We need a 48-hour notice for all refills.
- **Activity**: Slowly increase your physical activity. If recommended, attend your physical therapy (PT) and occupational therapy (OT) appointments.
- **Diet**: Eat foods high in fiber or take a fiber supplement. Drink at least 8 glasses of water every day to avoid constipation. Do not eat highly processed or pre-packaged foods.
- **Discharge Plan**: Make sure you understand your discharge instructions. Follow these directions at home. Call us if you have any questions: 207-885-0011.
After your surgery is complete, you may feel nauseous and not hungry. This is normal. You can eat as soon as you feel ready.

- When you feel ready to eat, choose healthy foods that are high in fiber. Do not eat highly-processed or pre-packaged foods.
- Drink plenty of water and clear fluids.
- At home, continue to choose healthy foods that are high in fiber.
- Prevent constipation with fiber supplements, eating foods high in fiber, and drinking at least 8 glasses of water every day. You can also try natural laxatives, like prune juice.

Discharge Plan

- Ask your care team if you have any questions about your discharge instructions. There are many new things to learn after surgery.
- Pay special attention to the instructions about:
  - Wound care and taking care of the surgical incision.
  - Pain management and medicine.
  - Bracing information, if this applies to you.

Pain management

- Keep your pain managed. Tell your care team if you are feeling pain.
- Take pain medicine, as prescribed.
- Make sure your pain is managed before your physical therapy (PT) or occupational therapy (OT) appointments.

Activity

- You can expect to be sore after surgery. Activity and movement will help with your recovery.
  - Walk around, with help from your care team.
  - Get out of bed and sit in a chair to eat meals, with help from your care team.

- Do the coughing and deep breathing exercises that the nurses show you.