

# SPINE DISCHARGE EDUCATION

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A Member of Trinity Health

# Discharge Education



A HIGHER LEVEL OF CARE

## Purpose

- Provide important information about your discharge after spine surgery



# Discharge Education



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## Preparing to Return Home

- You can expect to go home as early as the day of surgery, depending on your procedure and your surgeon
- Ask a family member or friend to help you for the first few days up to one week after surgery
- Your surgeon and clinical affiliate will assess your ability to be discharged
- Coordinate anticipated discharge time with nurse
- Have someone on standby to provide you transportation home



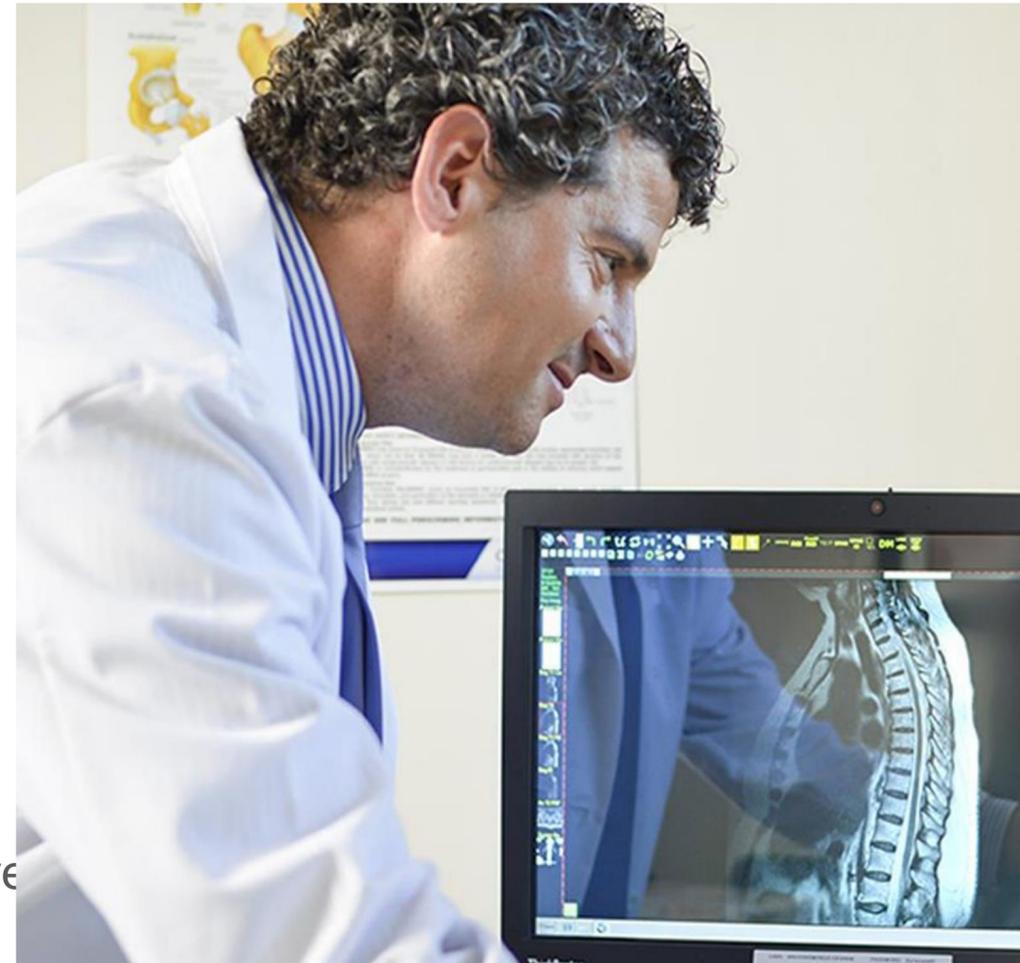
# Discharge Education



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## Discharge Criteria

- Eating & drinking without nausea or vomiting
- Vital signs stable
- Incision stable
- Physical therapy evaluation
- Pain tolerable with oral medications
- Urinating
- If you had a drain placed during surgery, it has been removed



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## Your Discharge is Very Important to Us!

PLEASE SET ASIDE AT LEAST 10 MINUTES TO GO OVER YOUR DISCHARGE PAPERWORK WITH THE NURSE

- Meaningful Discharge Time
  - Diet
  - Activity
  - Restrictions
  - Incision Care & Showering
  - Medications
  - Preventing Complications
  - 'When to Call Your Surgeon'
- You should be prepared for upfront cost of narcotics at discharge



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## Diet

- Resume previous preoperative diet unless otherwise instructed by your doctor



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## Activity

- Short frequent walks are recommended
- You should resume the level of activity prior to coming in the hospital to your tolerance



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## Restrictions

- No excessive bending or twisting beyond activities of daily living
- Refrain from driving until your surgeon clears you **and** you are no longer taking narcotics.
- No lifting greater than 10 pounds



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## Incision Care

- Check your dressing and/or incision every day
- If you have a dressing, you will be told at discharge when the dressing can be removed
- After the dressing is removed, if there is no drainage, you may leave the incision open to air or uncovered
  - If there is some drainage from your incision, apply another dressing and change daily
  - If you have Steri-Strips or tape over the skin, they will automatically fall off
  - If you have Prineo/Dermabond dressing, this will be removed in the office 10-14 days after surgery
- Do not use heat on or around your incision



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## Showering

- Showering instructions will be determined by your surgeon and will be reviewed at discharge
- After a shower, lightly pat the incision dry with a freshly clean, unused towel
- **No** rubbing or scrubbing the incision
- **No** soaking in tubs, hot tubs, pools, lakes, oceans, etc.
- **Do not** use lotion or powder on or around your incision



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## Anticoagulants (Blood Thinners)

- Generally, wait until 2 weeks after surgery to restart blood-thinning medication.
- Call the office before starting any DVT prevention or anticoagulation after surgery (Aspirin, Plavix, Coumadin etc.)
- Keep TED stockings or compression stockings on until cleared by your surgeon (12 hours on/12 hours off).



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## Pain Medication

### ACETAMINOPHEN (TYLENOL)

- **DO NOT** take more than a total of 4 grams (4000 milligrams) of acetaminophen (Tylenol) in a 24 hour period
- Some pain medications have Tylenol in them, it is important to know this when you are calculating your daily dose of Tylenol
- If you are not sure, check with your doctor or pharmacist



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## Pain Medication

### PRESCRIBED PAIN MEDICATION

- New medications will be electronically prescribed to your pharmacy at discharge
- You will be prescribed about a 5-7 day supply
  - Call office 2-3 days before you are out of pain management medication
- Do not take more than the MDD (Maximum daily dose) of your pain medication prescribed
  - If you are still having uncontrolled pain, call the office.



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## Preventing Complications

### PREVENTING CONSTIPATION

- Increase fluids and stay hydrated
  - Drinking plenty of fluids will also help you feel better
- Increase fiber (fruits/vegetables/bran)
- Prunes and/or prune juice
- Increase walking
- Take over the counter Miralax and Senna as directed.
- If you have not had a bowel movement in 4 days please call office.



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## Preventing Complications

### PREVENTING INFECTION

- Wash your hands often
  - Before and after meals
  - After using the bathroom
- Visitors should wash their hands



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## Preventing Complications

### PREVENTING PNEUMONIA

- Continue to use your incentive spirometer at home to prevent pneumonia
  - 10 times an hour while awake
- Sit in a chair
- Take short, frequent walks
- Brush your teeth



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## Preventing Complications

### PREVENTING BLOOD CLOTS

- Keep TED stockings or compression stockings on until cleared by your surgeon (12 hours on/12 hours off).
- Short frequent walks are recommended



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## Follow Up

**REMEMBER IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP YOUR FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT 7-14 DAYS AFTER SURGERY**

- You should have follow up appointments scheduled with your surgeon's office
- You will have a follow up visit with your surgeon's office approximately 2 weeks after your surgery
- Please call the office to ensure this visit has been scheduled
- At this appointment, you may discuss restrictions with your surgeon such as driving and resuming sexual activity



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## Call your Surgeon

### FOR NON- LIFE-THREATENING ISSUES

- Temperature >101° F
- Increased redness or swelling or drainage from or around your incision
  - There is noticeable drainage from the incision that is clear like water, mustard colored, white-cloudy or foul smelling.
- Pain not relieved by pain medication or worsening pain in the incision area
- Nausea or vomiting
- Calf pain
- Difficulty swallowing
- Change in bladder or bowel function
- New numbness or tingling
- Questions or concerns



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## Call 911

### FOR LIFE-THREATENING ISSUES

- Sudden shortness of breath or difficulty breathing



# Discharge Education

## Syracuse Orthopedic Specialists (SOS)

- Dr. Wulff

**315-251-3232**

## St. Josephs Orthopedic and Spine

- Dr. Bianco & Dr. Iorio

**315-329-2555**



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SOS 24/7 On Call

315-251-3100

SOS Plus

315-509-3056



# Questions?

Do not hesitate to call  
Courtney McChesney at  
(315) 744-1475  
or email  
[Courtney.Shoales@sjhsyr.org](mailto:Courtney.Shoales@sjhsyr.org)



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THANK YOU

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