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SPINE DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

Dr. Paul D. Sponseller

We hope these instructions will answer all of your needs when you are at home. Please ask any questions you have. If you need to contact us, it is best to call Dr. Sponseller's office at (410) 955-3137 from 8:30 to 4:30 or email his secretary at mbuie1@jhmi.edu. To reach our Nurse Practitioner, Kristen Venuti, please call (410) 955-4798 or email her at kvenuti@jhmi.edu. You may contact Dr. Sponseller via pager at (410) 283-8206, at home (410) 825-2756, or email him at psponse@jhmi.edu. For clinic appointments call (410) 955-3137.

Surgical Site: Please observe it, and take temperature 1-2 times per day for one week. Call if there is a temperature over 101.5 degrees more than once, or any increased redness or drainage. You may bathe or shower one week after surgery. Protect from sustained sun for six months.

Dressings: May be left off as long as incision is dry. "Steri-strips" should be allowed to come off by themselves.

Intestines: Bowel function may be slow because of pain medications. Try raisins, prunes, fruit, and bran to help with this. Over-the-counter laxatives are okay if needed.

Activity: You may sit, stand and climb stairs if able. No lifting over 15 pounds for first three months or 30 pounds for next three months. Bend from hips and knees, not spine. Keep spine straight. May swim and walk as much as desired (no diving). No other sports for first three months. No physical education, jumping, twisting, or running for the first 4 months. No contact or high-impact activities until further notice. Sleep flat on back if ribs have been contoured.

School or Work: You may return when your strength and energy permit. This usually takes two to four weeks after surgery. Notify us before discharge if you need anything to arrange home tutor or if you need any notes written.

Medications: Iron (ferrous sulfate), one 325 mg tablet 2-3 times per day for four weeks. Multivitamins should be taken for 1 month. Avoid non-steroidal medications for three months (Advil, Aleve, Ibuprofen, Naprosyn, aspirin, etc)

For pain: _____

Equipment:

Post-op Visit/ Return to clinic: Six weeks. You will need an x-ray then, so notify us before discharge if your health plan does not allow x-rays to be done at Hopkins.