

HOME INSTRUCTIONS
LUMBAR LAMINECTOMY

Dr. Holladay

- Call 913-955-3300 main number to make a follow up appointment for 2 weeks.
- Ask for Kellie, RN-ARNP for questions.
- Medication refill for Hydrocodone or muscle relaxants call your pharmacy.
- Surgical procedure information can be viewed at: HYPERLINK "http://www.understandspinesurgery.com/" www.understandspinesurgery.com/

Stenosis can occur in any portion of the spine and is caused by degenerative changes in the disc space, bones, and ligament structures. As the degeneration occurs the space for the nerve roots becomes compressed. Symptoms are related to the area of compression. In the lumbar area, the symptoms can range from pain, numbness and tingling in both or one leg as well as difficulty walking distances, pain with walking may increase and bowel or bladder difficulties.

Lumbar laminectomy is performed to remove the bone from around the compressed nerves. This may be performed at one or more levels depending on the examination. The surgery takes 1 to 2 hours, depending on the levels involved. The surgical incision is generally 2-4 inches in length and then the muscle is taken down along the bone structure. The bone is removed and the nerve roots are exposed. The nerve roots are examined to ensure adequate decompression. The muscle and tissue are closed and sutured over the spine and the incision is closed. The skin is closed with staples. A final dressing is placed.

Generally, you will be in the hospital overnight or 1 day in order to increase your activity, teach you care of the incision, home activities, and to adjust your pain medication before discharging you home. Rehabilitation is involved to assist with teaching you post operative back education and assess any need for placement in an acute rehabilitation program if indicated.

Please bring comfortable clothing to wear, pajamas of your choice, and shoes for walking on the unit. You may dress the next day as tolerated. You will be able to shower the next day. The dressing will be changed in the hospital. You may shower in 48 hours. Avoid direct water pressure on the incision area. No tub baths, hot tubs or swimming for at least 2 weeks, the incision needs to be well healed with no drainage. The dressing can be left off. Cover if the staples are irritated by your clothing. Staples will be removed in 14 days. If you notice the incision becomes red or swollen, abnormal drainage, or fever greater than 101.5°, you need to call the office to be seen.

Activity is as you tolerate. Light activity around the house for the first few days; then set about a walking program daily. Start slow and increase the distance on a weekly basis. Be consistent with activity throughout the week. Walking daily is the best way to re-educate and strengthen your back. You should be back at your normal activity level in 8-12 weeks. Participating in sports or in rehabilitation (Physical Therapy) will be discussed during your recovery visits.

Avoid activity that puts you into a prolonged stooped position such as mopping etc. Lifting, pushing, pulling is restricted to 10 lbs for the first 2 weeks. The muscles will be sore for the first 2-3 weeks. Use ice pack to the incision 45 minutes every 4 hours for 72 hours then as need. You may use heat, Ben Gay or Icy Hot type products as well, but only after the incision has healed. You can expect to have some discomfort in the back and legs as you increase activity.

Driving can generally be resumed in 1 week or when you feel comfortable that you would be able to stop the car emergently without the pain in your back limiting your response, and you are not on excessive

narcotic use.

You will have a narcotic medication for pain and may also have a muscle relaxant. Anti-inflammatory medication, such as ibuprofen, may be used if it is okay with your primary physician for short-term use only. The narcotic pain medication will be weaned over the following weeks as you increase your activity and decreased pain is attained. You should not require long-term narcotic pain medication. To avoid constipation, please drink plenty of fluids, juices, and add stool softeners and laxatives as needed. Walking helps the bowel function by stimulation.

Smoking cessation information is available in the hospital. Smoking contributes to degeneration of the disc. Smoking cessation is strongly advised.

