

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER MY SPINE SURGERY

Thank you for choosing Delray Medical Center for your spine surgery! This handout is meant to give you an overview of what to expect over the next few days. The Spine Team will assist you in your recovery but **YOU AND YOUR FAMILY** are the most important members of the team. We believe knowledge and preparation will make your recovery easier. If you have questions along the way, be sure to ask them. We are committed to providing quality medical care and excellent service to ensure the best possible outcomes following your spine surgery. Our goal is to always provide you with **EXCELLENT** service from start to finish.

DAY OF SURGERY

Following your surgery, if your pain allows and you are cleared, you may get up and walk to the bathroom with staff assist. You most likely will need to use a rolling walker for support. You may also need to have a brace or collar on. Please remember to ask the staff for help. Throughout your stay, please talk with your nurse about your pain and how you are feeling. It's best to stay ahead of the pain, especially the first few days after surgery.

DAY 1 AFTER SURGERY

You will be up with nursing staff walking to/from the bathroom, and if pain allows sitting up for your meals. You will also work with therapy today. They will review any precautions or specific instructions for your situation. Please keep in mind that position change is very important post-surgery, sitting or lying for prolonged periods of time may increase your pain & stiffness. You will also meet with Case Management to start discharge planning. Some patients are being prepared for discharge home.

DAY 2 AFTER SURGERY

This is similar to day 1. You will continue working with therapy, progressing your walking as pain allows. You may also practice getting in/out of a car. You will be more involved with managing your brace or collar so you understand how to adjust it at home. If you have any drains they may be removed today. Continue with discharge planning.

DAY 3 AFTER SURGERY

Similar to day 2. You should find that getting in and out of bed and up from chair is getting easier, your walking is getting easier as well. You most likely will still need the help of a rolling walker for support. You should be able to manage your brace without assist. Most drains are removed at this point. Discharge planning should be finalized and you should be getting ready to go home.

Other considerations:

- You will have pain, but know that our goal is to control your pain at a "tolerable" level. Please communicate with nurse about your pain level and what options you have to help manage it.
- A side effect of the pain medication may be constipation. Remember to drink plenty of fluids.
- While lying in bed or when seated in a chair, try to perform 10 repetitions of ankle pumps .

WHAT TO BRING TO THE HOSPITAL

As you prepare for your upcoming surgery at Delray Medical Center, you will want to bring the following items to the hospital. You can leave the items with family or friend while you are in surgery. They can bring your belongings to your room once admitted.

- ✓ The name of your preferred pharmacy with phone number and address
- ✓ Any braces you were ordered
- ✓ A list of all of your current medications with the dosage and frequency
- ✓ Hearing Aids
- ✓ Dentures and supplies
- ✓ Glasses / Contacts
- ✓ C-Pap Machine and supplies
- ✓ Chargers for your electronics
- ✓ Toiletries (including incontinence products if needed)
- ✓ Clothing
 - Loose fitting clothing to allow for movement. Tee Shirts and Elastic waisted shorts or sweatpants are preferred
 - Light jacket or sweater
 - Undergarments
 - Closed-toe shoes with good traction

***Please leave all jewelry, money/credit cards, and any other valuables at home. We are not responsible for misplaced items.**

Thank you for choosing Delray Medical Center

PREPARING YOUR HOME

The following safety tips will help you prepare your home before your surgery. We have included simple changes that will make your transition home easier for you and your caregiver.

MY CHECKLIST FOR HOME SAFETY	
✓ Completed	
WALKING SURFACES THROUGHOUT THE HOME	
	Remove all throw rugs throughout your home.
	Ensure walking paths are free of obstacles, i.e. telephone and electric cords, furniture, planters, etc. Remember to allow enough room for a walker to fit in the halls.
	Take extra care when walking where the surface changes from tile to carpet and vice versa.
	Be sure lighting is easy to reach or on a timer.
	Be sure phones are in easy reach and the cord is out of the way.
	Place television remotes, guides, and reading materials in easy reach of the chair or couch that you plan to use most often.
SEATING	
	Identify higher chairs; those with armrests are preferred.
	Add a firm pillow to lower chairs if needed.
	Avoid chairs with wheels and no armrests.
KITCHEN	
	Store objects most frequently used at waist to eye level to avoid excess bending or reaching.
	Place commonly used kitchenware or pans at counter level.
	Stock refrigerator with easy prep light meals.
	Use higher refrigerator shelves for items frequently used.
	Consider using disposable items for easy cleaning your first week.
	Ensure pet dishes are not in your walking path. Remove pet toys from floor.
	Keep pet care items at counter level.
BEDROOM	
	Ensure a light switch is within reach of the bed (Night lights are recommended throughout the house as needed)
	Ensure proper lighting in closets or keep clothing in room on top of dressers.
	Remove long bedding and covers to reduce tripping hazards.
	Keep a telephone within reach when in bed.
BATHROOM	
	Ensure the path from the bed to the bathroom has enough light for easy use at night.
	Place bathroom items, including refills, on counters for easy reach.
	Use proper equipment in the bathroom such as a commode over the toilet, shower seat, and / or a non-slip mat or decals.
	Consider grab bars for your shower stall or tub.
	Review how to get in/ out of your shower. Do you have a step into your shower or is it a flat walk in shower?

DELRAY MEDICAL CENTER PRE OPERATIVE CHECKLIST

This checklist will assist you in completing your PRE OP preparations to avoid delaying your surgery.

Surgery Date: _____

Pre OP Seminar scheduled/RSVP confirmed and/or watch video: _____

Pre OP Clearance appointment @ DMC scheduled: _____

4 WEEKS PRIOR TO OR AS SOON AS YOU BOOK YOUR SURGERY

- Medical Clearance **completed** by your primary
- Medical Clearances **completed** by your Specialists, if required
- Start making your discharge plans, confirm support system if needed
- Confirm Benefit Coverage i.e. Home Health coverage, OP Therapy, durable medical equipment
- Begin smoking cessation. Speak with your doctor about starting Nicotine Patch
- Complete pending dental procedures. If less than 4 weeks away speak with your surgeon.

APPROXIMATELY 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO SURGERY

- Have your prescription medication list ready including dosage and when you take your meds
- Obtain any equipment you may need prior to surgery i.e. walkers, braces
- Arrange for pet care
- Begin preparing your home for your return- allowing space for walker use, clear clutter etc.
- Begin preparing meals, grocery shopping

5-7 DAYS PRIOR TO SURGERY

- Stop taking blood thinners, supplements and anti-inflammatories as directed by surgeon
- Stop shaving legs or area around surgery site
- Confirm family or friend(s) that will drive you to surgery and assist at home
- Complete grocery shopping and meal prep

NIGHT BEFORE SURGERY

- Thoroughly wash your body using the antimicrobial soap provided. Avoid your face and private parts. Make sure to get your underarms, behind your knees and between and skin folds, this includes breast tissue. Use fresh, clean towels. Repeat the morning of surgery using a new set of towels.
- Use clean, freshly laundered pajamas. Make sure your partner is also showered and in clean pajamas.
- Make sure your bed linens are freshly laundered
- DO NOT USE ANY lotions or creams on your body
- NO PETS ON THE BED!
- No food or drink after midnight unless directed otherwise directed by Pre OP Nurse

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1

Q. Can I use my cell phone, computer or iPad in the hospital?

A. Yes. The hospital offers a free Wi-Fi network called "Delquest" for you to use.

2

Q. Should I bring my own walker to the hospital?

A. If you have a walker or are borrowing one- you can bring it with you. Therapy will make sure it's adjusted to the correct height for you. We do have walkers available to use while you are in the hospital if needed. Most patients need to use a 2 wheeled rolling walker after surgery.

3

Q. Can my family/ friends bring me food?

A. Yes. Please ask the nurse prior to eating anything to check your diet orders. Foods that need to be refrigerated will need your name, room number, and date on them before placing in the refrigerator on the unit. There is a microwave available for reheating foods.

4

Q. Does the hospital prepare special diets such as Kosher or vegetarian?

A. Yes. Please discuss your dietary needs with your admitting physician so that it can be ordered properly. You may also speak with someone in dietary about your special diet if you have any questions or issues. You may call the dietary department directly at x6133 for menu options.

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Q. Is there somewhere my family/ friends can get food in the hospital?

A. Yes. Our cafeteria is open from 7:00 am-10am and 11:30- 2:00 pm Monday –Friday. Saturday and Sunday hours are 7:00 am to 10:30 am. Our Coffee Shop serves Starbucks, sandwiches, salads, various snacks from 7am-4:00 pm daily. In addition, we have Subway that is open from 8:30am-10:00pm daily.

6

Q. Should I bring my own medications with me?

A. No. The hospital will provide your medications while you are here. Please bring a list of your medications as well as the dosage and frequency so that we can reconcile this before you return home.

7

Q. Should I bring my special equipment (C-PAP machine, brace for leg, etc.)?

A. Yes. Please bring any special equipment that you are currently using as prescribed by your health care provider. Be sure to put your name and phone number on it. Please bring supplies you will need for dentures, C-PAP, etc.

8

Q. How do I know where I'm going after surgery?

A. You should have a tentative discharge plan in place prior to having your surgery, i.e. going home with assist of family, friends or hiring private duty help. The Case Management team will help finalize the plan with input from the therapy team. Our goal is to send all our patients home that are safe to do so.

9

Q. Will I need a walker?

A. Yes, most of our patients need a 2 wheeled rolling walker after surgery. Please make arrangements to get your walker prior to surgery. If you purchase or borrow a walker, therapy will adjust it for you prior to discharge.

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Q. How long will I be in the hospital after surgery?

A. Most of our patients leave the day after surgery if they are medically stable, pain is controlled and you pass therapy. Insurance may dictate your length of stay as well. The entire team will be working with you for a safe discharge plan

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Q. What are the visiting hours?

Our visiting hours currently are from 9:00am-9:00 pm. Please refer to the "Scheduling and Visitation Policy" on our homepage for the most up to date information"