

#### THE PROCEDURE

Your surgical procedure is Posterior Cervical Discectomy. Please keep this information for reference when calling our office. On-call physicians will need to know exactly the type of surgery you have had, and the date. Your follow-up appointment is scheduled for 3-4 weeks after your surgery.

We discussed the risks and benefits of your surgery in the office. I have included these in your instructions, since it can be difficult to remember everything we discussed. Should you have any further questions regarding this information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

**Benefits:** Your surgery is being done to relieve pain that has not been relieved with conservative measures. Weakness and numbness can take weeks to months to resolve. Your surgery has been carefully selected and planned to best relieve your specific symptoms.

**Risks of your surgery:** These include, but are not limited to, infection, bleeding, nerve damage, weakness and/or pain (worse than you have now), spinal fluid leak (requiring bed rest and possibly more surgery), failure of surgery to relieve your pain, and the possibility that you could require more surgery including additional fusion operations.

As you recover from your surgery, you should experience progressive improvement in your preoperative pain. It is not unusual to feel some pain, numbness, tightness, burning or other "funny" feelings for a while following your operation. Usually these sensations will lessen and mostly go away with time. Numbness can last for weeks to months.

At the time of discharge, the hospital nurse should give you prescriptions and a follow-up appointment. If you were not given a return appointment, please call our office upon arriving home to schedule this visit. Please call between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

**Wound Care:** If your wound has been closed with Dermabond, please follow the care instructions from the Dermabond handout. Do not scratch the Dermabond. It will begin to slough off 7-10 days after your surgery. At this time you may use a warm wet washcloth to rub the rest of it off. If your wound has been closed with steri-strips (butterfly-like skin closures over your incision), you should remove them 7-10 days after your operation, if they have not already fallen off on their own (which is common and expected.)

If your wound has been closed with Dermabond, you may get your incision wet in the shower, as soon as you wish, since this closure is waterproof. If your wound has been closed with staples, sutures or steri-strips, you may remove your dressing two days after the surgery and, at that time, you may get your incision wet in the shower. New bandages or dressings are not necessary. Use only soap and water to gently clean the area around your wound. Do not soak your incision for four weeks following the operation. During this time, bathtubs, hot tubs, swimming pools, whirlpools, and the like, are not allowed. Do not let the shower water "beat" on your incision.

You should not put any salve, lotion, ointment or Vitamin E on your incision during the first month after surgery. If you notice any problems with your incision, such as redness, drainages, swelling, etc., please call the office as soon as possible for instructions. It is not uncommon to have mild redness with staples.

**Activities & Driving:** You are not permitted to drive a motor vehicle for three days following the surgery. You should not do any lifting, bending, straining, stooping, or twisting. You should not lift anything heavier than ten pounds. The only exercise permitted, and in fact encouraged, is walking. After you have been up and around for several days, begin a walking program, gradually progressing to one mile, two to three times a day. When you return for your first postoperative visit (one month), I will give you more exercises to do.

**Prescription Refills:** You have been given several medications. One is a pain medication and the other is a muscle relaxant. You should take this medication three times a day for the first three days following the



## PATIENT INFORMATION

### Posterior Cervical Discectomy

surgery and then reduce usage to an “as needed” basis. You may also take Ibuprofen, Advil, or Tylenol, as necessary. You have been given a supply of these medications from the time of surgery and you should not require any more. If you require medication refills, please call the office between 9AM and 5PM (Mon. thru Fri.). We will try to expedite your refill requests, but please allow us 24 hours after you request prior to calling our office to check on your prescription.

**Please Note: *The on-call physician will not refill prescriptions at night or on weekends.***

**Sexual Activities:** You may resume your sexual activities once your post-operative pain subsides. For females, take necessary precautions to avoid pregnancy until your fusion is solid and you have discussed pregnancy with me.

**Out of Work:** You can expect to be out of work for a minimum of three to six weeks following your operation, depending on your healing progress and type of work you do.

We want your surgical experience to go smoothly. If you have any questions or problems, please do not hesitate to call the office at 508.771.0006.

You may find the following websites to be helpful regarding your surgery: [www.allaboutneckpain.com](http://www.allaboutneckpain.com), [www.spineuniverse.com](http://www.spineuniverse.com), [www.neurosurgery.org](http://www.neurosurgery.org), [www.spinehealth.com](http://www.spinehealth.com), [www.allaboutbackpain.com](http://www.allaboutbackpain.com).

Thank you for letting me participate in your care,

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Patrick Murray, MD  
G. Kenji Nakata, MD