

Discharge Instructions – Brain

****Please call our office and schedule to have staples or sutures removed within 7-10 days of surgery****

Activity:

- Walk at least three times a day. Gradually increase your distance and add light activities each day.
- Do not exercise other than walking until you speak to your neurosurgeon at your post-operative appointment.
- No lifting, pushing, pulling or overhead reaching/lifting of objects over 5-10 pounds (a gallon of milk weighs 8.5 pounds) and no strenuous activity.
- Do not drive if you are taking pain medications, muscle relaxants, or if you are in pain. Do not drive for at least 1-2 weeks after surgery.
- You can return to work when you feel ready. However, you must stay within the 5-10 pound weight lifting restriction and start with light duties. Always check with your neurosurgeon prior to returning to work.
- You may resume sexual activity when this is comfortable for you.

Wound Care:

- Your incision will be closed with staples or sutures (stitches.) These staples or sutures will have to be removed 7-10 days following surgery. **Please call our office to schedule removal.**
- The dressing is usually removed the day following surgery.
- Generally it is recommended that you leave the wound open to air. If needed you may gently pat dry with fresh gauze any excess ooze/drainage.
- You may shower after surgery but be careful not to soak the incision and gently pat dry around the incision. Be careful not to rub or irritate the incision.
- **Do not** soak the incision in a bathtub or pool for 6 weeks.
- **Do not** put any ointments, creams, or lotions on the incision.
- Only clean your incision gently with soap and water. Do not use alcohol based solutions.

Pain/ Post-operative symptoms:

- You will have some pain at the incision and soreness of the muscles of the neck and skull. Some pain is normal as you resume your daily activities and will improve with time.
- You will tire more easily for several months after surgery.
- You may have headaches from swelling up to 2 weeks post surgery, these headaches should improve with time. If needed pain medications will be prescribed.
- You may temporarily have problems with speech, memory, concentration or motor movement and sensation. Discuss concerns with your physician.

Medication:

- Pain medication may be prescribed but only take if needed.
- **Do not** use alcohol while taking pain medication.
- Pain medications may cause constipation so an over the counter stool softener is encouraged (try Dulcolax, Milk of Magnesia or Correctol at first and Magnesium Citrate or Fleets enema if needed).
- Upon discharge you will be given a limited supply of pain medications. Please contact our office and allow at least 24 hours for all refills. **The after-hours doctor on call will not authorize medication refills or prescribe new medication.**
- Per law, controlled substances, such as narcotic pain medication cannot be called or faxed to the pharmacy. You or a designated person must either come to our office to collect a scripts or we can mail it to your home. **Please allow 72 hours for controlled substance scripts.**
- Anti-seizure medication such as Dilantin or Keppra may be prescribed for you to take post-operatively. If you were on an anti-seizure medicine before surgery, you should continue to take this medication unless told otherwise.

Call our office if you experience any of the following:

- A temperature of 101F or above.
- Increased redness, soreness, swelling, or foul-smelling drainage in or around incision.
- The incision opens.
- You continue to have extreme pain an hour after taking pain medication.
- Nausea or vomiting
- Shortness of breath
- Severe difficulty swallowing liquids
- Any other concerns