

Dr. Le's and Alegre's Fusion – Cervical Spine

Wound Care

You may shower the day following surgery but keep the incision/scar dry and free from direct water for three days. After you get the wound wet, in three days, put a dry dressing on the incision until your first appointment. Dr. Alegre will have you go home with a drain that leaks out on the dressing. He will instruct you to come to the Alpine office the follow day to have it removed or will instruct you on how to remove it the next day. Do not apply any lotion or creams to the incision and do not submerge in a bath or pool for at least 2 weeks.

Leg Stockings

The leg stocking are used to help prevent blood clots. You can remove them the week following surgery and can take them off to shower.

Activity Level

You can start walking immediately after surgery. You may be instructed to wear a neck collar for comfort until your first post-operative appointment, or longer depending upon your surgery. You can take it off periodically, especially to shower. You will be instructed on gentle motion exercises for you neck during your first post-surgery appointment. Most patients do not need physical therapy. You should not drive for the first two weeks or after you have taken pain medications. No lifting anything more than a gallon of milk during the first to week following surgery. Your ability to return to work will depend on what you do for work.

Post-op Medications

You should have pain medication and possibly muscle relaxer medication prescribed on your pre-surgery appointment that was sent to your pharmacy. You need to have this prior to being released home after surgery. You will take a baby 81 mg aspirin for 7-14 days following surgery to help prevent blood clots, unless you are already on a blood thinner or anti-platelet medication such as Plavix or Brilinta. Unless otherwise directed, you should resume your pre-surgery medications, but should not take anti-inflammatories such as Ibuprofen or Aleve for 3 months after surgery. If you need a refill on your pain medication, call the office or your pharmacy no less than one day prior to you being out of medication. We cannot prescribe medications after hours or on weekends

Diet

You may want to eat thicken liquids such as pudding and Jello if you have difficulty swallowing, which is common after neck surgery. Otherwise, resume your regular diet as tolerated.

Concerning Problems

You will have problems swallowing but you should be able to swallow water. If you can't swallow water, then notify your doctor ASAP. If you have trouble breathing, call 911, as this can mean severe swelling around your wind pipe. Notify us if a lot of bleeding or drainage occurs beyond the first day. If you develop sudden weakness, or loss of feeling in your arms or legs, call 911. You can expect some intermittent pain and tingling into your arms, or pain into the back of your shoulder/s. Notify us if you have a fever greater than 100 degrees.