

Post-operative Instructions after Brain Surgery

The following is a list of instructions, for your convalescence, following your brain surgery. These represent general instructions to be used as guidelines. They may be modified for an individual patient.

1. Keep your incision dry until your staples are removed.
2. Call the office to schedule an appointment for staple removal to be done 10-14 days after your surgery.
3. If there is any redness or drainage from your incision, or if you have a fever, call our office immediately or go to the Emergency Room.
4. If you have a worsening of your headache, drowsiness, or new weakness on one side, or your family notices a dramatic change in your behavior, call our office immediately or go to the Emergency Room.
5. If you are taking Dilantin or other medications to prevent seizures, be sure not to miss any doses, and do not let your prescription run out.
6. If you are having a headache and need more pain medication, please be sure to call our office during business hours on Monday through Friday 9am through 5pm. Prescription renewal by phone may require 48 hours.
7. Lie only on a bed. Head elevated on at least 2 pillows. No sofas or recliners. Sit only in a straight back chair (such as a dining room or kitchen chair.)
8. No bending, stooping, pushing, lifting or straining. Lift only with one arm at a time & only a weight that you can easily manage. Get up from a lying down position by turning first on one side or the other. **DO NOT PUSH BACKWARDS WITH YOUR HEAD & NECK** to adjust your position in bed. Turn on your side to do this.
9. For minimally invasive surgery you may shower the 2nd morning after surgery. For all others, you may shower 5 days post-operatively. The first day is the day after surgery. Wash your hair and the incision area gently using baby shampoo. DO NOT use a hair dryer after washing your hair and do not brush your hair away from the incision since this will put strain on the suture line.

10. Begin walking in the house and progress to outdoors. Take someone with you the first few times until you are quite confident of your abilities. Slowly increase the distance each day so that you will be walking 1 mile/day by your 2nd post-operative week, 2 miles/day at 2 weeks post-operative. These are GUIDELINES, NOT RULES.
11. After leaving the hospital, you will be allowed in the car twice, once to go home, the second to come back to our office. You will get your next set of instructions upon your return.
12. Do not drink alcoholic beverages post-operatively. You may be given Anticonvulsant medication to reduce the risk of seizures (epilepsy.) Make certain that you understand the medication instructions that you are given and follow those instructions faithfully.
13. Constipation is a common side effect of some pain medications so it is important to drink plenty of liquids and eat a diet high in fiber. You may need to take a stool softener for a short time while taking pain medication, but avoid laxatives. It is fine to take Milk of Magnesia, Metamucil, Fibercon, Citrocil or other mild laxatives.