

# POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR BRAIN/CRANIAL SURGERY



## MONTGOMERY BRAIN & SPINE

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### **After your surgery there are several points we would like you to keep in mind.**

Most patients will be able to a fairly normal level of activity following surgery. We do ask that you adhere to the activity restrictions described, as well as note some of the other care instructions. We value your health, well being and comfort. If you do have any questions or issues related to your recent surgery, please feel free to call our office at **240-678-8341**. Please leave a message and one of our practitioners will return your call.

### **Activity Restrictions**

The first few weeks after you are discharged you may feel tired or fatigued. This is normal. You should become a little stronger every day. Activity is the most important measure you can take to prevent complications and to begin to feel like yourself again. You will be given individualized instructions before you go home, but in general:

- Increase your activity slowly, do not do too much because you are feeling good.
- If you feel light headed or fatigued after increasing activity, rest, decrease the amount of activity that you do, and begin building your tolerance to activity more slowly.
- Lie only on a bed. Head elevated on at least 2 pillows. No sofas or recliners.
- You may resume sexual activity as your tolerance allows.
- **DO NOT DRIVE** until you speak with your physician.
- Do not lift objects over 10 pounds until approved by your physician.
- Avoid any activity that causes you to hold your breath and push, for example weight lifting, lifting or moving heavy objects, or straining during bowel movements.

### **Dressing Removal & Wound Care**

- We ask that you monitor your incision for any significant swelling, redness or drainage and notify us promptly if you notice any of the above.
- You may be discharged from the hospital with a dressing over the incision. We ask you remove the dressing within 1-2 days following your surgery.
- You will have either staples or sutures, they need to be removed within 7- 10 days following surgery. Please call our office or your Primary Care doctor to setup an appointment for suture/staple removal.
- Keep your incision clean and dry.
- Do Not apply any lotions, ointments or other products to your incision unless directed by your physician.

### **Showering & Bathing**

- You may shower within 4 days of your procedure. We ask that you refrain from soaking in a bathtub, hot-tub or pool for the first four weeks. Do not rub the incision.
- You may wash your hair with a mild shampoo (Baby Shampoo). Please do not rub the incision.
- **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.

### **Smoking**

- Smoking delays the healing process thus we ask that you refrain from smoking.

### **Eating & Drinking**

- You may resume a normal diet following your procedure. We ask that you refrain from alcoholic beverages especially while taking pain medication.
- You should avoid constipation. A well balanced diet and normal activity will help avoid this. If you do become constipated you may take over the counter medications. If you are unsure about what to take, please contact your physician.

**Medication**

*Blood Thinners*

- You may resume your usual medications immediately after surgery, with the exception of any blood thinning agents, anti-inflammatory agents and aspirin based products. Blood thinning agents such as coumadin, plavix, heparin and aggrenox may usually be restarted within 10 days of surgery, so long as there has been no recent incisional swelling or drainage. We will specify when it is okay to resume these medications.

*Anti-Seizure Medication*

- You may be given Anticonvulsant (anti-seizure) 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.

**Return to work**

- Dr. Amini will inform you when you are ready to return to work. It usually occurs on the 4th week with increasing work hours.

**Office Follow Up**

We recommend regular office follow ups following your brain surgery. We recommend follow-up visits 4 weeks, 3 months and 6 months after surgery. If you develop any new signs or symptoms before a scheduled follow up and need to be seen, please contact our office.

**Staple removal:**     **Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time** \_\_\_\_\_

**Follow-Up Visit:**     **Date** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time** \_\_\_\_\_

If you are not able to keep this appointment please call our office to reschedule.

***Please call our office at 240-678-8341 if you notice any of the following signs or symptoms:***

- Confusion, fainting, blacking out, extreme fatigue, memory loss, or difficulty speaking.
- Double, or blurred vision. Loss of vision, either partial or total.
- Stiff neck and/or fever with a temperature greater than 101.5 degrees F.
- Hallucinations
- Severe sensitivity to light. (Photophobia)
- Seizure
- Severe headache or change in headache.
- New neurologic symptoms including numbness, tingling, or weakness in your extremities or face.
- Swollen, painful calf with or without fever.
- Significant redness, swelling or drainage from the incision site.
- Significant clear fluid drainage from the incision site.

***NOTE: If you are unable to reach our office and have noticed any of the above conditions, please report to the nearest Emergency Room for prompt medical attention.***