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## LUMBAR LAMINECTOMY

*Lumbar laminectomy often requires an overnight hospital stay. The procedure typically takes 1½ to 2 hours to complete. Many patients are able to walk on the day of surgery. Patience is often necessary after surgery to give nerves an opportunity to recover and pain to decrease after laminectomy.*

### **Preparations for Surgery:**

It is important that you inform me of any medical problems, old or new, even if you are currently under the treatment of another physician. You must provide a full listing of any medications or vitamin supplements you are taking and any allergies that you have. It is best to bring a written list with medications names and dosages.

At least **10 days prior to surgery** you will be required to stop taking aspirin, ibuprofen or naproxen as well as any medicines that contain them such as cold remedies or headache preparations. You must stop taking all non-steroidal anti-inflammatory agents whether prescriptions or over-the-counter. Ask if you are not certain. Please inform me of any anticoagulants or "blood thinners" you are taking, such a Coumadin. All of these medicines will increase bleeding during surgery.

### **Pre-operative Evaluation**

As soon as your surgery date is known, call your internist or primary care physician to arrange an appointment approximately 1-2 weeks, but no more than 30 days, prior to surgery. When you are seen, please have your physician forward your history and physical and the results of your tests to the anesthesia office at Sinai Hospital. Their fax number is 410-601-8528. If you do not have a treating physician, please discuss this with my surgery scheduler. She will help you to set up an appointment for your pre-op evaluation.

Depending on your health history, it may also be necessary to schedule an evaluation with a specialist such as a cardiologist or pulmonologist.

**Insurance Concerns:** Please contact the Sinai Hospital Admitting Office (410-601-5659) to be certain all preparation are in order for your admission to the hospital. When you call, please have your date of surgery and all necessary insurance information.

### **Pre-operative Visit**

Arrange a pre-operative appointment in our office one or two days prior to surgery to discuss all final preparations. At that time, you will sign your operative consent for the hospital so that it will be done prior to your arrival at the hospital. We will also discuss which, if any, medicines you are to take the morning of surgery. If you have questions, write them down and bring them to this appointment.

**Night Before Surgery:** You must stop eating and drinking at midnight. After midnight, nothing should enter your mouth.

**Day of Surgery:** On the morning of surgery, you must continue to avoid eating and drinking. This means that you are not allowed to have a cup of coffee or a glass of orange juice; you are not even allowed to chew gum or suck on a hard candy. Any medicines that you were instructed to take should be taken with a small sip of water.

You should wear loose-fitting clothes to avoid irritation of the incision. Should you have a living will or an advanced medical directive, bring that with you. You should also **bring** with you **the permission slip** that you signed in our office at your pre-operative visit one or two days prior to surgery **and the order sheet** that accompanies it. Leave any valuables such as jewelry at home to avoid loss. You will have it removed as soon as you arrive. Remember that someone must drive you to the hospital and be available to drive you home from the hospital.

Please arrive at the time specified by my office staff, not by the hospital. Report to the admitting desk on the main floor of the hospital. They will direct you to the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Waiting Area for the operating room. You will then be taken to the Holding Area. There, you will meet a nurse who will help you change into a hospital gown. Your vital signs will be obtained and the nurses will ask you many questions, most of which you have already discussed with me. It is the standard operating room routine for them to ask the same questions. An IV will be started and you will have an opportunity to meet with the anesthesiologist.

**After Surgery:** Immediately following surgery, you will be taken to the recovery room. I will speak with your waiting family members. You will stay in the recovery room for 1-2 hours. If you are feeling well and able to ambulate independently, then you may be discharged home from the recovery room. Otherwise, you will be transferred to a room in the Spine Center for an overnight stay. You will be discharged home, as soon as you are comfortable enough and able to walk on your own.

**When you go home:** It is important that you stay at home for the first week. You should contact our office for an appointment 7-10 days following surgery to have the sutures removed.

#### ***Activity Limitations***

1. **Stay at home until your first post-op visit.**
2. You are allowed to go up and down **stairs.**
3. **You may not drive** or be a passenger in a vehicle until after the first post-op visit.
4. **Do not lift** anything over approximately 5 pounds.
5. You may **shower** once you are able to stand comfortably for 10 minutes or so. Have the water just strike the front of your body. **Keep the incision dry** until the staples are out.
6. You may certainly make yourself something to eat, carry a book, or put a tape in the VCR.
7. **Cleaning, laundry, and vacuuming are forbidden.**
8. As soon as you are comfortable enough, you may **take daily walks** outside.

Following the first post-op office visit, activities will be slowly progressed. Patients can return to light duty activities at work typically by three to four weeks and most of normal activities by six weeks. Patients who participate in heavy labor activities usually require about two months to get back to full duty at work.