



## Brain Tumor Surgery Post-operative Instructions

Successful surgery depends not only on the success of the procedure, but also on your cooperation and compliance during the post-operative period. To assist you in this process, below are instructions and guidelines to follow during your recovery period.

### Wound

- There will be either staples or dissolvable sutures in the incision on scalp. Your incision will be assessed for these at your post-operative office visit.
- Begin changing your dressing daily after you get home from the hospital unless directed otherwise. You will need to keep your head covered when in direct sunlight until your hair covers the incision.
- You will need to keep the incision dry for at least 2 weeks - so you will need to wear a shower cap when showering. **Do not soak the incision in water for 6 weeks.**
- Do not put creams or ointments on the wound for the first 4 weeks.

### Pain Relief

- Our office will provide you with a mild prescription pain medication to help with your surgical pain. You should use these medications sparingly and only as directed. It is expected that most of your pain can be managed with over the counter medications such as Tylenol.
- As your incision heals, we would expect you to begin weaning from prescription medications. This should begin about a week after surgery.
- If you are having trouble controlling headaches, please notify our office. You may be referred to make an appointment with your neurologist, but we need to be aware of this.
- If you are prescribed antibiotics and/or steroids after surgery, please finish them in their entirety.
- You will have a neurologist to help follow you for anti-seizure medications. Please follow his/her

instructions regarding these medications and contact their office if you need refills.

- You will need to avoid anti-inflammatory medications for 1 week before and 3 weeks following surgery.
- You will need to avoid blood thinners (Aspirin, Coumadin, Lovenox, Plavix) for 1 week prior to surgery. In most cases, you may restart them (at the doctor's discretion) 4 days after surgery or 4 days after drains are removed.
- **Remember, ABSOLUTELY NO MEDICATION REFILLS WILL BE PROCESSED ON THE WEEKEND.** Please plan accordingly. Contact your pharmacy to process all refill requests.

### Exercise/Activity

- Avoid riding in a car for 2 weeks – unless medically necessary.
- The best exercise is walking. Small amounts done frequently are best. Try to set a goal to walk a little more each day. This of course will depend on your individual situation and abilities.
- Wear the white compression stockings given to you at the hospital for 2 weeks following surgery. You can take them off when walking but should wear them at night and when inactive for prolonged periods.
- Avoid strenuous activities for 3 months after surgery.
- It is best to sleep with your head elevated on 2-3 moderate sized pillows. This will help reduce swelling around the incision site – especially if your incision is near your temple area.
- If you have had a seizure, **DO NOT GO SWIMMING.** For your protection, you should not go into the water unsupervised. Please see your neurologist for more information regarding this restriction.
- **DO NOT SMOKE.** See your primary care physician if you need assistance to quit smoking.

### Driving

- You will not be able to drive for approximately 4 weeks after this type of surgery. This may be longer if you have had a seizure. We will ask that you check with your neurologist to see when it is safe to resume driving.
- It is the policy of this office to advise you not to drive while under the influence of pain medications.

### Return to Work

- If you can work from home, you can begin doing light desk/phone work as tolerated about 3 weeks after surgery.
- If you have to report to the office to perform your job, you will be able to do this at 4-5 weeks after surgery. You will be restricted to light desk/phone type work.

- If your job requires heavy physical activity, you will be unable to perform this type of work for at least 12 weeks after surgery.
- All return to work estimates are based on non-malignant tumors. If your tumor will require additional treatment such as radiation and/or chemotherapy, you may need to be off work for a longer period of time. The physician providing these treatments will address when and if you are able to return to work.

### Follow-up

- You have a follow-up scheduled with one of our clinical staff in our Plano office on \_\_\_\_\_ . Please arrive at least 10 minutes early to check in.
- You should also make an appointment to follow up with your neurologist as he/she recommends.
- If your tumor requires additional treatment, you will be referred to an oncologist to arrange and/or provide this treatment.

### What to Watch For

- Please contact our office for any of the following:  
Oral temperature greater than 100.5 ° F  
Excessive redness, swelling, or drainage at the incision site  
Clear liquid draining from the wound  
Headaches or dizziness that occurs when upright that is better with lying down  
New or increasing pain/numbness/weakness in your arms/legs  
New or worsening headaches  
Blurred vision, slurred speech, or confusion
- For general medical problems such as sore throat, cough, nasal drainage, etc., please contact your primary care physician. You should also contact your primary care physician regarding any questions about your routine medications not prescribed by this office.
- If you have a seizure, go to the emergency room and have them notify our office and your neurologist.
- For medical emergencies, please call 911 or report to the nearest emergency room.



**NEUROSPINE**  
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Date of Surgery: \_\_\_\_\_ Scheduled Surgery Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Hospital Arrival Time: \_\_\_\_\_ No food or drink after midnight day prior to surgery.