

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS AFTER TRANSPHENOIDAL SURGERY

Please call (303)724-2305 for:

- A temperature of 101 degrees or higher.
- Worsening headache not relieved by prescribed pain medications.
- Continuous faucet-like nasal drip or drainage of fluid down your throat.
- Continuous nosebleed.
- Significant changes in behavior or ability to think.
- Persistent vomiting. Inability to keep down food or fluids.
- Inability to urinate or have a bowel movement.

For symptoms that seem life-threatening, call 9-1-1 immediately.

Post-operative instructions:

- **TO AVOID LEAKAGE OF CEREBRAL SPINAL FLUID:** Do not blow your nose or drink out of a straw for 4 weeks! Try to sneeze with your mouth open for 4 weeks to avoid generating high pressure in your head.
- **Pain control:** The most common type of pain experienced following this type of surgery is headache. You will be given a written prescription for pain medications upon discharge from the hospital. Make certain that you take your medications with food. Do not take ibuprofen or aspirin until 4 weeks after surgery. Please note that Vicodin and Percocet both contain acetaminophen (Tylenol). Do not take Tylenol while you are taking these medications because taking more than 4000 mg of Tylenol in a 24-hour period can lead to liver damage. Sleeping with your head elevated on pillows may help decrease headaches.
- **Lifting:** Try not to lift, push, or pull more than 10 pounds for 4 weeks after surgery.
- **Activity:** It is important to get out of bed and move as soon as possible after surgery to avoid developing problems such as blood clots or pneumonia. Walk with assistance if you feel unsteady. Get plenty of rest. Avoid rigorous activity for 4 to 6 weeks after surgery.
- **Exercise/Sports:** No exercise for the first 2 weeks after surgery. After 2 weeks, you may take short walks, gradually increasing the distance. At 4 weeks after surgery, you may begin to slowly return to your regular exercise routine. A headache is a sign that you are doing too much too soon. Do not do anything with an increased risk of head trauma for 8 weeks after surgery (such as skiing, snowboarding, mountain biking, contact sports, etc.).
- **Work:** Plan to be away from work for 4 weeks if you have a sedentary job and 6 weeks if you have an active job
- **Driving:** You may drive 1 week after surgery if you are no longer taking narcotic pain medications and you are not experiencing visual problems that affect your ability to drive.

(OVER)

You may experience:

- **Nausea:** Post-operative nausea may be related to your pain medications. If possible, take the medication with food. Eat small, frequent meals and avoid spicy or fried food.
- **Fatigue:** It may take 6 weeks or more for your energy level to return to normal. You will probably feel very fatigued for the first 2 weeks then notice a gradual increase in energy thereafter.
- **Constipation:** This is a common problem after surgery. It is helpful to increase water, fresh fruits and vegetables, fiber and bran in your diet. Also, take over-the-counter docusate sodium tablets, 100 mg 1 to 2 times per day to keep your stools soft. You may decrease the amount taken if your stools become too soft. If constipation is not relieved with these measures, you may take Milk of Magnesia, 1 to 2 tablespoons every 12 hours. If this doesn't work, it is recommended that you use a Fleet enema or rectal suppository to assist with evacuation of the rectum. This is preferred over heavy straining. If an enema or rectal suppository is not successful, please notify us.
- **Nasal drainage:** If you notice a constant faucet-like drip of fluid from the nose or down the back of your throat, please call us immediately. This may be cerebral spinal fluid. When you start to blow your nose 4 weeks after surgery, you will notice drainage of mucous and blood. This is normal. Secretions will pool in your sinuses overnight so you may have more drainage in the mornings.
- **Sinus congestion:** You may use nasal saline spray 2 weeks after surgery and nasal washes 4 weeks after surgery. Nasal spray can help relieve some of the crusting in the nasal passages. Nasal washes help drain your sinuses.
- **Visual changes:** It is normal for your vision to wax and wane for 3 to 4 months after surgery.