

LANCE E. GRAVELY, M.D., INC.  
NEUROLOGICAL AND SPINE SURGERY

**Anterior Cervical Discectomy/ Vertbrectomy and Fusion**

*Please see General Post-Operative Instructions for full details*

**Activity:**

- If you have difficulty breathing, feel tightness in your throat or inability to swallow, you may have “airway compromise” and is a medical emergency. Seek evaluation at once.
- You should be using a hard collar at all times when not sleeping.
- If sitting, use only a straight back chair to ensure proper support not to exceed a half hour at a time. You may increase your sitting time slowly.
- Lie only on a firm mattress, no couches or recliner chairs.
- Absolutely no bending, stooping, pushing, lifting or straining.
- Avoid lifting objects heavier than a gallon of milk in weight.
- Absolutely no driving for 6-12 weeks.
- It's normal to have mild sore throat/swallowing difficulty/hoarseness for several weeks. Over the counter throat lozenges and occasionally oral steroids may help decrease swelling.
- Avoid housework, especially vacuuming and sweeping.
- OK to cook, as long as you are not lifting anything heavier about gallon of milk in weight.
- Learn proper body mechanics to maintain a neutral spine position.
- Wear Hard Cervical Collar is directed.
- Increasing pain is generally a signal to rest.
- DO NOT: Engage in strenuous activity for at least 12 weeks after surgery.

**1st Week Post-Operative:**

- May ride in a vehicle as a passenger, but no driving and no extended road trips. Keep the time in the car less than 20 minutes.
- Walk around in your home on a smooth, flat surface. Try to be ambulating half of the day.
- You may stair climb with assistance.
- Do not lift anything heavier than 10 pounds
- Take pain medication as directed, don't try to “tough it out.” You will heal quicker if you feel better.

**2nd Week Post-Operative:**

- Make sure to make your first post-op visit.
- An exercise program will be discussed at your first visit.
- Increase your walking to 1 mile per day if tolerated well.
- Light housework but still no vacuuming or sweeping.
- Refrain from sexual activity.

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**3rd Week Post-Operative:**

- You may resume sexual activity if relatively pain free.
- Increase walking time and distance as tolerated.
- Increase light housework as tolerated.
- If you need to lift, don't exceed 25 pounds using proper body mechanics
- OK to use a hot tub or spa if you are "scab free."

**4th Week Post-Operative:**

- Gradually increase walking to 1-2 miles daily or as tolerated.
- Increase housework as tolerated.
- Return to work will be discussed with Dr. Gravely and will be patient specific.