



## POST-OPERATIVE LUMBAR DISCECTOMY, LAMINECTOMY PROTOCOL

Week 0 to 6:	
<b>Patient</b>	
<b>Surgery Date</b>	
<b>Surgery</b>	
<b>Levels</b>	
<b>Date at 6 weeks</b>	
<b>Date at 12 weeks</b>	
<b>Information about your surgery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One or more of the above procedures has been performed on your spine to relieve your symptoms.</li> <li>• Post-operatively, you may still experience some of your pre-operative symptoms.</li> <li>• This may take some time to settle while the tissue heals and the nerves recover.</li> <li>• It is important that you give the operated area time to heal and you should therefore adhere to the guidelines in this information pack.</li> <li>• It is also important that you optimise the function of the rest of the spine and the rehabilitation that is done with your physiotherapist will help with this.</li> </ul>
<b>Brace / Corset</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may be supplied with a brace by the orthotist when you come into hospital.</li> <li>• The brace may be used for the first 6 weeks post-operatively.</li> <li>• It is not necessary to sleep with it or wear it if you are relaxing at home.</li> </ul>
<b>Moving in and out of bed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roll sideways bending one knee to get in and out of bed.</li> </ul>
<b>Sitting</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You may start to sit within the first 2 to 3 days after your surgery.</li> <li>• Let pain be your guide as to when and how long you sit.</li> <li>• Your physiotherapist will show you correct sitting posture.</li> </ul>
<b>Bathing, showering, going to the toilet</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To avoid excessive stretch on the healing nervous system, you are advised not to sit in the bath for at least 2 weeks.</li> <li>• You should shower or wash in a standing position.</li> <li>• You should not bend to wash your legs, you will have to lift your feet up one at a time.</li> <li>• Use non-slip mats in the shower to avoid accidents.</li> </ul>
<b>Bending, lifting, carrying</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to avoid bending and twisting for 6 weeks.</li> <li>• To pick up an object you must bend your knees and keep your back straight.</li> <li>• 'Stabilise' before lifting up.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You may need to hold onto something for support.</li> <li>Hold the object close to you and don't lift anything too heavy.</li> </ul>
<b>Driving and car travel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You should not drive a car for at least the first 2 to 4 weeks.</li> <li>If you have to travel in a car, you should be in the front passenger seat with the seat tilted back.</li> <li>Your physiotherapist will show you how to get in and out of the car before you leave the hospital.</li> </ul>
<b>Stretches and Exercises:</b>	
<b>Week 0 to 6:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neural stretch (side-lying): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lie on your side with the knee bent and slightly backwards.</li> <li>Straighten the knee in this position.</li> <li>Move your foot up and down 10 times while keeping the knee straight.</li> <li>Bend the knee again, move it slightly forward, and straighten the knee in the new position.</li> <li>Move foot up and down 10 times.</li> <li>Repeat with the other leg.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Glute maximum stretch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Figure 4 position.</li> <li>Hug your knee toward your chest.</li> <li>Slowly angle it toward opposite shoulder.</li> <li>Repeat with other leg.</li> <li>Hold each side for 30 seconds.</li> <li>Repeat 3 times.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Piriformis stretch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bend one leg up and cross the foot over the knee of the straight leg.</li> <li>Pull the knee towards the opposite shoulder.</li> <li>Repeat with other leg.</li> <li>Hold each side for 30 seconds.</li> <li>Repeat 3 times.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Stabilising with alternate leg straightening. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repeat 10 times with each leg.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Stabilising with controlled leg fallout. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repeat 10 times with each leg.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Bridging: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stabilise NB!</li> <li>Hold each bridge for 5 seconds.</li> <li>Repeat 10 times.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Clam exercise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lie on side with knees and hips bent to 45° (stabilise).</li> <li>Keep feet together, lift knee up and out.</li> <li>Repeat 10 times with each leg.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Lumbar rotation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stabilise.</li> <li>Squeeze a ball or rolled up towel between your knees.</li> <li>Slowly roll knees over to one side and then the other.</li> <li>Only let your knees go as far as what you can control.</li> <li>Roll continues each side.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Curl up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stabilise as you squeeze a ball or rolled up towel between your knees.</li> <li>Roll up to lift only your head and shoulders.</li> <li><b>NB:</b> Tummy must not bulge outwards.</li> <li>Hold for 5 seconds, repeat 8 times.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Headlights up and down in 4-point (with neural mobilisation from head): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kneel with knees below hips and hands under shoulders.</li> <li>Stabilise and get spine into a relaxed neutral position.</li> <li>Slowly drop head down and up again – you will feel a pulling sensation at operation site ... this applies a gentle stretch to neural tissue.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rotate pelvis upwards ('headlights up') and downwards ('headlights down').</li><li>• Initiate movement at the coccyx, not the mid-spine.</li><li>• Move head and pelvis separately.</li><li>• Repeat each 10 times.</li></ul> <p>11. Side flexion stretch (discectomies only):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stand with back to wall, feet shoulder width apart and arms at sides.</li><li>• Slide one hand down leg.</li><li>• Come up slowly, repeat on other side.</li><li>• Repeat 8 times to each side.</li></ul> <p>12. Lumbar extension (discectomies only and then only if prescribed by your physiotherapist):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lie on tummy and gently push up one elbows.</li><li>• No feeling of discomfort and belly button is always on the bed.</li><li>• Hold for 10 seconds, repeat 5 times.</li></ul> <p><b>All exercises to be done 3 times daily.</b></p>
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**Please consult with your physiotherapist at 6 weeks to progress your exercises.**



**Good luck with your rehabilitation!**