

Surgery To Remove Hardware

General Information

Your doctor wants to remove the plates, rods, wires, or screws that was placed at the time of your spinal fusion. These are known as “hardware.”

These were used to help support the area until the bone grew and the fusion took place. Over time, the hardware can loosen and cause discomfort.

Together, you and your doctor will decide if surgery to remove the plates, rods, wires or screws is right for you.

About Surgery

After making a cut (incision) in the area of your spinal fusion, your surgeon will remove some or all of the plates, rods or screws (depends on what you have) and check your fusion.

Your surgeon may put bone in the space where the screws were. This bone may be taken from you, a bone bank or both. You may have new hardware placed with that bone.

Risks

All surgery has risks. Some of the general surgery risks are:

- problems with general anesthesia (being put to sleep)
- lung problems
- blood clots
- bleeding
- infection
- fluid pooling near the incision site
- unexpected problems such as allergy to anesthesia or injury to a major blood vessel that can cause death.

X-ray may be used during your surgery. If you are pregnant, this could be unsafe for your baby.

Your doctor cannot guarantee that you will feel relief after surgery.

Your Care After Surgery

- You will likely go home the day of surgery. If you need to stay in the hospital, it should only be for 1 or 2 days after surgery.
- You should be able to take care yourself at home. Members of your health care team may arrange for extra help if you need it.
- Tell a member of your health care team if you need home care, support services or medical equipment such as a hospital bed. You can meet with social services before you leave the hospital.

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Medicines

You will receive a prescription for a pain medicine before you leave the hospital.

- Use this medicine **only** when acetaminophen (Tylenol®) does not give enough pain relief.
- Limit acetaminophen to 4,000 milligrams each day.
- Do not to take nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medicine (NSAIDS) such as ibuprofen (Advil® and Motrin®) and naproxen (Aleve®) for 6 to 12 months after surgery. These medicines can interfere with the fusion process.

Long-term use of prescription pain medicines may interfere with your body's natural ability to help control pain.

Over time, you need more and more pain medicine to receive the same pain relief. Use prescription pain medicine as needed and only for a short time.

Where To Bring Your Paperwork

Midwest Spine & Brain Institute can help you fill out paperwork if it is related to disability, FMLA or other medical legal forms. There is a charge for this service.

Please mail your paperwork to Midwest Spine & Brain Institute, Att: Medical Legal Department, 1950 Northwestern Ave. Suite 102, Stillwater, MN 55082. Allow 1 to 2 weeks for the forms to be completed and mailed to you.

Do not bring any of this paperwork with you to the hospital.

Call 651-259-4545 if you have questions. Leave a message for the Medical Legal Department.

Whom To Call With Questions

- Call 651-241-7246 to make an appointment.
- Call 651-430-3800 to talk with a member of your health care team if you have any questions.