








Care After Lumbar Spinal Fusion Surgery — At A Glance

For an Emergency, Call 911

Activity 	Procedure Site Care 	Pain Control 	Self-care 	When to Call Your Doctor 
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Balance rest and activity. ■ Walk as much as you are able. Do not sit or lie down for long stretches. ■ For 4 weeks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Do not lift anything heavier than a gallon of milk. — Do not drive while you are taking opioid pain medicine. — Avoid activities that involve bending, lifting and twisting, including vacuuming, shoveling, golfing, bowling and swimming. ■ For 3 weeks: Use your incentive spirometer every 2 hours while you are awake. ■ Talk with your doctor if you have concerns about sexual activity. 	<p>Your incision will take about 6 weeks to heal. You may have swelling, bruising, feel itchy, feel sore and have numbness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Look at your incision every day for redness and drainage. ■ Avoid touching near the incision. ■ Remove the dressing 48 hours after you leave the hospital, unless you have other directions. ■ Do not put ointments, creams or lotions on the incision. ■ You may take a shower. Let water run over the incision. Do not soak it. Pat it dry or let it air dry. ■ Do not take a tub bath or soak the incision until your surgeon says it is OK (such as in lakes, hot tubs or pools). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Take all of your medicines as prescribed each day. ■ Take your prescription pain medicine as directed for 3 to 4 days, and then try to taper. ■ Use ice on the incision. Follow directions in your book. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Eating foods rich with these nutrients are important for your recovery: protein, iron, vitamin C, calcium and fiber. ■ To help avoid constipation: eat more foods high in fiber (fruits and vegetables). ■ Drink many glasses of water each day unless you have restrictions. ■ Keep all follow-up appointments, even if you are feeling better. ■ Talk with members of your care circle about how you are feeling. ■ Do not use tobacco. If you need help quitting, ask your doctor for  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Call your surgeon if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — you have chills and a temperature higher than 101.6 F — you have increased soreness, drainage, swelling or redness at your incision site — you have weakness or numbness in your arms or legs that gets worse — your pain is not getting better — you have questions or concerns. <p style="text-align: right;">AllinaHealth </p> <p style="text-align: right;">allinahealth.org</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">© 2017 ALLINA HEALTH SYSTEM. TM – A TRADEMARK OF ALLINA HEALTH SYSTEM OTHER TRADEMARKS USED ARE OWNED BY THEIR RESPECTIVE OWNERS THIS FACT SHEET DOES NOT REPLACE MEDICAL OR PROFESSIONAL ADVICE. IT IS ONLY A GUIDE. ortho-ah-47693 (9/17)</p>