Life After Surgery

Getting Moving Again

It may come as a surprise to you that patients after spinal surgery are encouraged to get up and start moving around as soon as possible. Careful movements according to your recovery plan suggested by your doctor, can safely ease pain by providing nutrition and lubrication in the areas close to the surgical area. Movement of joints and muscles also signals the nervous system to block incoming pain.

When you are medically stable, the physical therapist will develop the exercises program for your spine. Physical therapy is a key part of recovery. To ease the discomfort the activity will initially cause, pain medication is recommended prior to therapy. In addition, the physical therapist will discuss plans for rehabilitation following hospital discharge. Depending on your limitations, an occupational therapist may provide instruction on how to use certain devices that assist in performing daily activities, such as putting on socks, reaching for household items, and bathing. A case manager will discuss plans for your return home and will ensure that you have all the necessary help to support a successful recovery. If needed, the case manager can help arrange for you to have a home therapist.

The success of your spine treatment will strongly depend on how well you follow your orthopaedic surgeon’s instructions. As time passes, you will potentially experience a dramatic reduction in pain and a significant improvement in your ability to participate in daily activities. But be moderate and try not to overdo it!