Surgery  Teaching Packet
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Date of Surgery: ______________________
Time: _____________________
Arrival Time: _________________________
Prior to Surgery:

- **PREPARING FOR SPINAL SURGERY**

- **Location:**
  - Southwest Texas Methodist Hospital
  - 7700 Floyd Curl Drive 575-4000
  - (see map in next slide)

- **CLEARANCE FOR SURGERY:**
  - Your Surgery Packet contains a script for:
    - blood work, chest x-ray, urine analysis and EKG.
  - Your **primary care physician** will need to do the testing and send a pre-operative clearance prior to surgery. And/or any other specialty: Cardiologist
  - It is the patient's responsibility to make that appointment with your primary doctor

- **MEDICATION BEFORE SURGERY:**
  - You will need to be **off all “blood thinning” medicines 5 days prior to surgery**
    - Plavix, Coumadin, Ibuprofen, Aspirin, Vitamin E., Ginkoba, dietary supplements
  - Please be sure to discuss which medications you can take the day of your surgery with your physician or nurse: you may call our office
  - If you are Diabetic and take **Metformin** you will need to stop that 24hrs before surgery
BLOOD DONATION:
You may opt to donate your own blood to have on hand during your surgery. If this is something you wish to do, we will arrange it for you. Please make sure you verify with your doctor that you are not anemic. 210-731-5555 donate 2-3 weeks prior to surgery.
Cont. Prior to Surgery:

- **DAY BEFORE SURGERY:**
  - **Call Hospital to preregister:** Methodist (210) 575-4995 or admitting office
  - **Brace**
    - Your will be fitted for a brace, depending on your insurance, will determine from how your brace will be obtained. You may contact our office medical assist for more information.
    - Some patients will get a BoneGrowth Stimulator if indicated or ordered by your doctor

- **SHOWER BEFORE SURGERY:**
  - We ask that you shower the night before and the morning of your surgery with an antibacterial soap. No heavy scrubbing is necessary.

- **DO NOT EAT OR DRINK ANYTHING FOR 8 HOURS PRIOR TO SURGERY**
  - If your surgery is in am stop eating solid food after midnight the night before
  - Have a list all of the medications you are currently taking.

  - Report to the Admitting on the 1st floor approximately 3 hours before surgery.

  - Dr. Johnson and the anesthesiologist will review the procedure, discuss anesthesia and answer any questions.
  - Once you are taken to the surgical area, your family will be directed to a family waiting room near the area. They will be notified when the surgery is complete.
AFTER-SURGERY:

- You will be in the recovery room for approximately 1 - 2 hours.

- After surgery it is not unusual to have mild throat irritation (Cervical Surgery due intubation, and the larynx/esophagus being retracted. You may request throat lozenges or spray to help decrease discomfort.

- Cervical spinal surgery then the throat irritation will continue a little longer.

- Your incision will be tender, but most of your pain will be felt in your low back, buttocks, legs and feet (if Cervical then no pain or a few spasms between the shoulder blades. The pain may be in a different place than it was before surgery, please report.

- Patients are given medication through a PCA machine (Patient Controlled Analgesia.) With PCA, the medication is sent through an IV line at the push of a button, which the patient controls. Once you are taking liquids (bowel sounds), you will begin taking pain pills and taken off the PCA.
AFTER - SURGERY:

- Dr. Johnson will instruct the Nurses and Physical Therapists to begin assisting you to walk very soon after surgery. This process begins slowly and they will increase the amount you walk as you gain strength. This reduces some risks of surgery, such as blood clots and pneumonia. BE SURE TO CALL FOR ASSISTANCE WHEN GETTING OUT OF BED.

- You may shower 2-3 days after surgery. The nurses will assist you. Your incision will be covered with waterproof dressings.

- You will begin to wear back brace. The brace helps to support your back muscles, especially when walking or for exercises. You do not need to wear it to sleep or just to go to the bathroom.

- You will be discharged from the hospital approximately 1-3 days for cervical surgery and 4-6 days after lumbar surgery, depending on the procedure.

- Some patients are transferred to an in-patient rehabilitation facility depending on their needs.
RECOVERY AT HOME:

- **PAIN MANAGEMENT:**
  - Dr. Johnson or your management will prescribe medication for you to take once you leave the hospital.

- If you have a pain management doctor it is your responsibility to follow up with your doctor for medications. We do not take over medications.

- **You may refer to our refill medication policy for more information**
RECOVERY AT HOME:

**WOUND CARE:**
- You should purchase: 4x4 gauze pads; paper tape, waterproof adhesive tape.
- Once home, change the dressing every day at least once, preferably after you shower, or more often if the incision is draining. It is best to keep the area as dry as possible.
- Please cover the incision when showering for the first week. Then, After 1 week, you may shower without any covering, letting the soapy water run over the incision. Pat it dry, and cover with the gauze.
- Call the office to report any redness, swelling, bleeding or pus from your wound, or for a fever.

**NUTRITION:**
- Be sure to eat a well balanced diet. Protein promotes wound healing. Pain medication and decreased activity can cause constipation. Drink 8-10 glasses of water a day, eat fresh fruits and vegetables, and add prunes, raisins and bran cereals to your diet if you do become constipated.
- A stool softener taken 1-2 times a day is helpful. You can use over-the-counter laxatives, such as Senekot, or Milk of Magnesia. Dulcolax suppositories or Fleets enemas are also available without a prescription. Call our office if the problem continues.
RECOVERY AT HOME:

ACTIVITY AND EXERCISE:

- Avoid riding in a car for **the first two weeks** until you come to the office to have your staples removed. **No driving for 6 weeks**
- Start taking short, frequent walks in the beginning. Shorter, more frequent walks throughout the day are more beneficial than one long walk each day.
- You may gradually increase the distance as tolerated.
- Your back brace/walker will help give support to your muscles when you walk.
- If your pain increases, you may be walking too much or too far, so try backing off for a day or two and then resume slowly.
- **No lifting greater than 5 lbs.** No pushing, pulling or overhead work. No baths, swimming or hot tubs for at least 1 month or until your incisions is completely healed. Once you have had your initial postop appointment outpatient rehab may be ordered.

- Please call the office to schedule your **two-week appointment to have your staples removed.**
  
  **If your in rehab they can take out your staples there.**

- Call our office to schedule your **6 week postop appointment.**

Feel free to call the office during office hours for any questions you may have.