

## **Lumbar Microdiscectomy/decompression**

Below are some of the most common questions we receive from patients who are considering proceeding with a lumbar microdiscectomy surgery. Please keep in mind that the recovery from surgery is quite subjective and is affected by various factors such as patient age, comorbid illness, degrees of spinal cord or nerve impingement, the length of illness prior to surgery as well as the degree of disability prior to surgery to name a few. The answers below are based on the average patient that we see.

### **1. How long will I be out of work?**

The average length of time out of work after a microdiscectomy surgery is between 1-4 weeks. Patients who perform labor intensive jobs are most likely to be out of work closer to 4 week.

### **2. When will I be able to drive?**

Most patients are able to begin driving, short distances, between 1-2 weeks after surgery. You may be a passenger in a car as soon as you feel up to it. We do advise that you are prohibited from driving while taking narcotic pain medication.

### **3. When will I see you back in the office?**

The first post op visit is approximately 2 weeks after surgery, however if you have any questions or concerns please call the office 303-697-7463. If we think we should see you in the office sooner we will then schedule an earlier appointment.

### **4. Will I need Physical therapy?**

Yes, most patients require a formalized outpatient physical therapy program after a microdiscectomy procedure.

### **5. Will I need to have sutures removed?**

Most patients do not have sutures that need to be removed. There are internal sutures that will dissolve with time.

### **6. What restrictions will I have after surgery?**

For the first 2 weeks your activity will be limited to walking. We encourage you to walk as much as you are comfortable. During this time you may go up and down stairs, with the use of a railing and you may also sleep in a normal bed. You will be limited to lifting 5 lbs for the first 2 weeks. After 2 weeks you will be able to resume low impact cardiovascular activities and increase the amount of weight you are lifting. Within a reasonable amount of time after surgery you will have very few restrictions in your activities. Please be sure to discuss any specific questions you have with us in the office.

### **7. Is the surgery very painful?**

Please keep in mind that pain is a very subjective experience and one's reaction to surgery is affected by a variety of factors as mentioned above. It is not uncommon for a patient to experience "reminder" symptoms after surgery. These symptoms are often described as feeling similar to the patient's preoperative symptoms but not as intense. . While this is common in recovery from spine surgery we understand that this can be very concerning to our patients. We encourage you to call the office to discuss any concerns you may have after surgery 303-697-7463.

### **8. Do I need to avoid any medications or foods before or after surgery?**

We ask that you refrain from taking any nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medications such as aspirin, Ibuprofen (Advil) or Aleve for 10 days prior to your surgery. If you have a physician who recommends that you do not stop Aspirin prior to surgery please be sure to discuss this with our office. We also ask that you avoid any herbal supplements, as well as vitamin K, vitamin E and fish oil for 10 days before your surgery.