

Herniated disc surgery

These instructions are to be printed. The instructions include fields that need to be filled in by hand.

The operation is done due to a herniated disc. During the operation, the protrusion that is causing pressure to the nerves and the spinal cord is being removed. The operation will not have any effect on the support structure of the back.

Recovery

After the operation, you will be moved to the recovery room, where your general condition, postoperative pain and touch sensations on your legs will be monitored. The lower extremities are being controlled regularly in case of sensory loss or other sensory disturbances. As you get up from your bed after the surgery you need the assistance of a nurse and/or a physiotherapist, and you must first turn to your side before trying to get up, and try to avoid any rotational movements of the back.

The physiotherapist will give you separate instructions on how to move and exercise after your discharge from the hospital.

Before you can be discharged, you must be able to pass urine. You can sit normally in a car on your way home from the hospital. You should however avoid sitting still for over a half an hour, as well as any deep stretches forward, tilting backwards, rotational movements as well as lifting and carrying heavy objects. It might be easier to sit on a higher/raised chair at first. You must also remember to sit with your back straight and your feet firmly on the ground.

Sexual activities may be resumed approximately two weeks after the surgery. In the beginning of your recovery, you must follow the restrictions of movement the doctor has set.

Because of the medication, the surgery and your time in the hospital, it is easy to get constipated, and due to the pain, straining on the toilet can be difficult. It is wise to make sure you keep in motion, drink plenty of water and eat fiber rich food after the surgery to improve the bowel activity. From the pharmacy, you can also buy medication that will soften the stools as well as enemas to help with the bowel movements.

Wound treatment

The operation wound will be held dry for one day after the surgery, after which you are allowed to shower.

Before you go to the shower, the bandages and gauzes on top of the wound will be removed. The wound can then be showered, and dried gently by tapping it, and a new bandage will be put to place if one is needed. If there is no discharge from the wound, it is not necessary to cover the wound with a dressing. Wound dressings can be bought from the pharmacy.

There are either sutures or staples in the wound, which can be removed after 10-14 days in your own health center, occupational health service or other health clinic. The sutures/staples can be removed _____/_____. You can go to the sauna one day after the sutures/staples have been removed.

Pain treatment

It is good to use painkillers regularly at first and after that when needed. The pain in the wound will usually last for a couple of weeks. You may experience backaches and/or numbness or pain in your legs even a month after the surgery. It is individual how the previously compressed nerve will heal, and it can take months. The symptoms may also be permanent.

Paracetamol

Anti-inflammatory analgesic

Strong analgesic

Other medications

The operating doctor will determine the length of your sick leave.

Contact

In case of any signs of inflammation (pain, swelling, heat, redness, discharge), increasing weakness of the lower extremities or radiating pain to the lower extremities or other problem (such as stomachaches, constant nausea, vertigo, fever or heavy bleeding from the wound) you should contact your own health center or the treatment unit:

Day surgery unit, weekdays from 7am–3pm, telephone 06 213 1552

Or your own health center or occupational health service

Telephone nursing services from 15.00–08.00 on Monday–Thursday and from 14.00–08.00 on Friday and 24 hours a day during weekends and on midweek holidays, telephone 116 117



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This instruction is intended for our patients who are in care relationship.