WILL I WEAR A SPINE BRACE?
Not all surgeries require a brace, please check with your surgeon. If you are advised to wear a brace, this is worn while out of bed, except to shower, for an estimated 3 months but is dependent on your surgeon’s instructions.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT MY LEVEL OF ACTIVITY TO BE LIKE AFTER SURGERY?
No strenuous activity for 1-2 weeks after surgery. We encourage frequent walks and increasing the distance gradually to tolerance. No sitting for longer than 30-45 minutes without changing position. If you had placement of hardware (fusion) there may be specific instructions from your surgeon about pushing, pulling, bending, twisting or lifting greater than 5-15 pounds.

WHEN CAN I SHOWER?
Showers can be taken after Day 1 of surgery. However, cover the incision until staples or sutures are removed. If you have steri-strips, cover your incision for 5 days only then OK to get wet. Avoid targeting water pressure directly on incision. If incision becomes wet, pat dry instead of rubbing to avoid irritation.

CAN I DRIVE AFTER SURGERY?
We do not recommend driving while taking narcotic pain medications. Additionally no driving for 2-3 weeks while taking any new medications that cause drowsiness.

WHAT SHOULD I EAT?
We encourage drinking 6-8 glasses of water daily, unless otherwise instructed. Eat foods high in protein to promote wound healing.

WILL I BE ABLE TO SMOKE?
No smoking for at least 3 months as this may decrease wound and bone healing. We encourage you to quit smoking for your health and healing process after surgery.

WILL I HAVE PHYSICAL THERAPY?
You will be encouraged to have physical therapy prior to and during your hospitalization, however check with your surgeon whether therapy is recommended after your specific surgery.

WHEN CAN I RETURN TO WORK?
This depends on your surgery. For simple surgeries, you may return from 2-8 weeks. More complex surgeries or placement of hardware (fusion) may anticipate 8-12 weeks.

WHEN ARE MY STAPLES/SUTURES/STERISTRIPS REMOVED?
Typically 10-14 days by your surgeon’s nurse.

WHEN WILL I SEE MY SURGEON?
Prior to surgery a six-week post-op visit is scheduled. This date will be on your hospital discharge instructions. If you do not have a visit scheduled, please call the spine surgery office.