

## Neurosurgery

# Following a lumbar microdiscectomy

- You have had an operation to relieve the pressure on a nerve passing from your back to your leg. A small incision will have been made in the skin of your back overlying the affected area. The part of the prolapsed (slipped) disc that is putting pressure on the nerve is removed, but most of the disc material is left in place.
- We would like to offer you the following information and advice to aid your recovery.

## Getting home

You will normally be allowed to leave hospital when you and the physiotherapist are happy with your mobility. This tends to be on the first or second day after your operation. Please pre-arrange either a friend or relative to collect you, as driving yourself or taking public transport is not advised in the early stages of recovery. Hospital transport is only available in certain circumstances. Please speak to one of the nurses as soon as possible if you think you will have problems with transport.

## Wound care

Your wound will be approximately six cms long and will be closed with either absorbable stitches or clips. You may shower but bathing should be avoided for at least two weeks. When you shower avoid getting water directly on the wound for the first two weeks.

**Absorbable stitches** (nurse to tick box which either applies)

Do not disturb the steri-strips (the little strips of tape over the incision); they will fall off after a week. If a dressing is required then simple dry dressings from the chemist are sufficient. However, it is unlikely that a dressing is necessary after two days.

**Clips**

The clips are usually removed at seven days after the operation and can be done by the nurse at your GP surgery. The nurse on the ward will provide you with a letter and clip remover for you to take to the surgery; you only have to make an appointment at the surgery.

**Date for removal of clips:** (leave blank for date to be entered)

Please contact your consultant's nurse practitioner or GP to report any of the following:

- Redness
- Wound leakage
- An elevated temperature

## **Physiotherapy**

This will normally be arranged as an outpatient at a centre or hospital near your home at about four weeks after your operation. It is important for you to continue with the exercises that have been given to you by the physiotherapist to strengthen your back and other important muscle groups and so aid your recovery. Heavy lifting and carrying should be avoided. Please refer to the physiotherapy advice sheet and discuss any particular concerns with your physiotherapist.

## **Recreational activities**

Walking is a good general form of exercise. When you first come out of hospital start with short walks and then gradually build up. Swimming is the best activity to do following your surgery to strengthen your back. You may start to swim four weeks following surgery. Any other sports should be avoided until you can discuss them with your consultant. Your physiotherapist can also provide you with advice and feedback about your progress following surgery.

## **Driving**

You may resume driving when you feel comfortable and safe.

This is usually about two to four weeks following your surgery and provided you have no altered sensation or weakness in your legs. If in doubt discuss driving with your GP or await your clinic appointment with your consultant.

## **Work**

You will need to be off work for at least three weeks. If you have a job that involves a lot of physical activity you may need a longer period off work. Please discuss any concerns with the medical team. The hospital can give you an off work certificate (Med 3) or ask your GP.

## **Follow up**

You will be sent an outpatient appointment in the post; this tends to be in two to three months. If you have any queries before your review please contact the nurse practitioner for your consultant's team.

## Before you go please ensure you have with you:

- Letter for practice nurse (if appropriate).
- Letter for your GP to be dropped in at your earliest convenience.
- Supply of drugs (more can be supplied by your GP).

**Clinical Nurse Practitioner:** (leave blank for name & contact details to be added)

**Ward Telephone:** (leave blank for number to be inserted)

For further information, please refer to the following:

### The Brain and Spine Foundation

Helpline number: 0808 808 1000

[www.brainandspine.org.uk](http://www.brainandspine.org.uk)

### Backcare

Helpline number: 0845 130 2704

[www.backcare.org.uk](http://www.backcare.org.uk)

Please ask if you require this information in other languages, large print or audio format:  
01223 216032 or [patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk)

Potete chiedere di ottenere queste informazioni in altre lingue, in stampato grande o in audiocassetta.

### Italian

若你需要本信息的繁體中文、大字體或音訊格式的版本，請要求索取。

### Cantonese

तमने आ माहिती वीछ भाषाओमां, मोटा अक्षरोमां अथवा सांभली शकाय जेवा माध्यम (ओडीओ इमेज)मां जेठती छोय तो कृपा करीने पूछो.

### Gujarati

تکایه پرسیار بکه نه گهر نه وزانیاریهت دهوی به زمانیکی تر , به بیٹی گه وره یانیش به شیوهی دهنگ

### Kurdish

آگر آپ کو یہ معلومات دوسری زبانوں میں، بڑے الفاظ کی اشاعت میں یا آڈیو ٹیپ پر درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی اس کیلئے درخواست کریں۔

### Urdu



Addenbrooke's is smoke-free. Please do not smoke anywhere on the site.  
For advice on quitting, contact your GP or the NHS smoking helpline free, 0800  
169 0 169

## Document history

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Contact number	Bleep 152 350
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