



200 GARDEN CITY PLAZA, SUITE 102  
GARDEN CITY, NY 11530

PHONE: (516) 246-5008  
FAX: (516) 740-0876

## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Dr. Cohen's office will call you at home after you are discharged from the hospital to set up your first post-op appointment.

### **Expectations:**

Expect to feel somewhat weak and tired when you first get home. You should feel a little stronger each day, but even if you are not weak, you should relax for the first 24 hours and do minimal exercise. The key to getting your strength and stamina back is to get up and around. You may take one or two naps during the day, but don't go home and lay in bed. You'll probably be sore around your incision(s). You may still have some pain, tingling or numbness. This should decrease gradually over the next several weeks as the nerves recover and heal.

### **Activity:**

Walking is the best exercise after surgery. Begin walking around the house. Start by walking three minutes out of every hour that you are awake. Avoid any strenuous activity and do not lift, pull, or push any object more than 10 pounds. Gradually increase your activities over the next few weeks. If your pain level increases after an increase in your activity, this means that you may be doing too much too soon and you should return to your previous activity level for a few more days.

### **Wound/Incision Care:**

You may take showers. Keep a dry, tight dressing on your incision while showering and change it with a new dressing afterwards. Do not submerge your incision under water for at least three weeks following your surgery (no bath tubs, hot tubs, swimming pools, etc.). Do not apply any lotions or ointments to your incision for at least three weeks following surgery because they leave a greasy residue, which attracts germs. If your incision was closed with non-absorbable sutures or skin staples, these will be removed in the office two weeks after surgery. If your incision was closed with absorbable sutures (sutures which are under your skin and which you cannot see), you will have steri-strips on your incision.

### **Cervical Collar/Back Brace:**

If Dr. Cohen has advised you to use a cervical collar or back brace, then you should wear your collar/brace as much as possible after surgery when you are up and around. The collar/brace helps to restrict movement at the surgical site and aids in bone healing. You may remove your collar/brace to shower, to sleep, to eat, or to sit in a reclining position. You must always wear your collar/brace while riding or driving in a car. In no event should you undertake any sudden movements.

### **Out Patient Physical Therapy:**

Dr. Cohen will give you a prescription for physical therapy and you will be instructed on how to arrange for therapy close to your home.



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**Pain Management:**

Increase in pain for more than two hours after an activity usually means you’ve done too much too soon. Don’t just reach for the pain pills. Take pain as a warning sign to slow down and pay attention to your posture and movements. You may also alternate warm and cold packs to the painful area(s) to help relive muscle spasms and pain.

**Medications:**

**Do not resume taking the following medications until discussed with Dr. Cohen:**

- |                  |                       |                       |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>NSAIDS</b>    | <b>Aleve</b>          | <b>Vitamin E</b>      |
| <b>Aspirin</b>   | <b>Advil</b>          | <b>Fish Oil</b>       |
| <b>Ibuprofen</b> | <b>Excedrin</b>       | <b>CO Q10</b>         |
| <b>Motrin</b>    | <b>Multi-vitamins</b> | <b>Blood Thinners</b> |

**Medication Refills:**

Prescription renewals or refills will be done during your office visit or by calling Dr. Cohen’s office. Prescriptions will be called in only during normal office hours, which are 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday. *No prescriptions will be called in on weekends or on holidays. Prescriptions will be called into your local pharmacy within 24 hours of your request, unless it is an emergency.* Do not wait until you are completely out of medication before you call the office since this may result in you having to do without medication until your request can be processed. **READ ALL PAIN MEDICATION LABELS.**

**Spinal Fusion Patients:**

***For patients who have had spinal surgery with implants (fusion, disc replacement, stabilization with metallic or plastics hardware): you need to be pretreated with an antibiotic for any invasive procedures, including dental work/cleaning.***

Please leave the following information when you call the office to request a medication refill:

- Your name
- Phone number where you can be reached if there are any questions concerning your request
- Name and dosage of medication needed
- Name and phone number of your pharmacy

Call Dr. Cohen’s office at (516) 246-5008 if:

- You have a fever
- You have a new onset of weakness or numbness in your arms and/or legs
- You have trouble controlling your bladder or bowels
- You have excessive drainage or increase redness around your incision
- You have persistent headaches, nausea, or vomiting

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patient’s Signature