

POST-OPERATIVE RECOVERY - CERVICAL SPINE

HOSPITAL STAY : 2-3 DAYS

BEFORE SURGERY: Inform Mr Malham about any medical conditions or previous operations. If you have a medical condition such as diabetes, heart problems, high blood pressure or asthma, Mr Malham may arrange for a specialist physician to see you for pre-operative assessment and look after you following the operation.

Inform Mr Malham of medication that you are taking and/or have allergies to medications.

Patient must stop using the following, 10 days pre-operatively:

- Aspirin
- Plavix
- Isocover
- Asasantin

Patient must stop using blood thinning medication (*such as Warfarin*), 3-5 days pre-operatively.

AFTER SURGERY: You will be provided after your operation with a soft cervical collar to wear when out of bed.

You should not drive but can travel as a passenger in the car.

Make sure you avoid extreme neck movements (*i.e. looking over shoulders, neck rolling*) and avoid activities above shoulder height.

You can undertake light exercise with walking up to 30 minutes per walk. This can be done 3-4 times/day.

Mild discomfort and residual arm pain/numbness is common in the first few weeks as the nerve root(s) bruising, and inflammation settles down. Make sure you take pain relief if required.

Wound Care

Your neck wound will be covered with a waterproof dressing. This means that you can shower and bathe as normal. If water gets under the dressing it should be removed and replaced. The waterproof dressing can be removed after 7 days.

The wound will be raised and slightly red initially. This is because the sutures under the skin (*sub-cuticular*) are dissolvable. These usually dissolve 60-90 days after surgery. The scar will then start to flatten, narrow and the redness will settle.

If the wound is uncomfortable and irritated you can apply moisturiser, Bio Oil™ or Vitamin E Cream to help soothe the irritation.

POST OPERATIVE APPOINTMENT:

You will be required to attend a Post-Operative Appointment with Mr Malham, 4 weeks after your surgery. At the appointment further instructions will be given regarding rehabilitation, Post-Operative care and return to work plans.

As a general guide, most patients resume light duties/activities 4 weeks after surgery, moderate duties/activities from 8 weeks and full/normal duties and activities from 12 weeks post-operatively.