

## Taking Care of Your Incision

Your incision should remain dry. There should not be an increase in drainage from the time you leave the hospital. Do not apply any creams, lotions, or powders to the incision. Your incision may be left open to air or covered, as directed by your doctor. Check your incision every day for redness, drainage, swelling, warmth, and/or tenderness.



# Home Medications



Take your pain medication as directed by your doctor. Follow instructions on the medication label and stay on a schedule.

If you were taking such medicines as aspirin, Motrin, Naprosyn, ibuprofen, or Celebrex before your surgery, check with your surgeon before taking these again at home.

## Taking Other Medications

Most of your home medications for high blood pressure, heart problems, or other medical problems were continued while you were in the hospital. Check with your surgeon if you have any questions about your medications.

# Walk, Walk, Walk...

The best form of rehabilitation following a spine surgery is walking. It improves your aerobic fitness and allows low impact, overall arm and leg strengthening without straining your spine repair. Your surgeon recommends the following for the first 4-5 weeks after your procedure:

- > Use the distance or time walked in the hospital as your starting guide.
- > Increase the repetition of the same distance OR gradually increase the distance in small increments.
- > Walk on even surfaces for exercise.
- > Avoid hills or stairs when you can.
- > Limit sitting to approximately 45 minutes at a time.
- > Go for at least a short walk every 2-3 hours.



When you have a “good day”, there can be the tendency to overdo. Be careful not to increase your activity in large increments. This can result in increased back pain or return of your leg/arm symptoms. This may set you back for a few days. Find the balance of increasing your exercise gradually, without straining your repair.