

Surgery date: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected discharge date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Spine Surgery Pathway – Minimally Invasive Surgery (MIS)

These are goals for your recovery. Your experience may not follow this pathway exactly. Your doctor or nurse will tell you what to expect.

Before Surgery	
<b>What should I do?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow the instructions your care team gives you.</li> <li>• Talk with your health care agent about your advance directives (such as your Health Care Proxy form).</li> <li>• Start thinking about discharge planning.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Choose a caregiver to help you after you’re discharged.</li> <li>– Think about who will be there during your discharge teaching.</li> <li>– Make sure someone can pick you up by 11:00 AM on your expected discharge date.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>What can I eat and drink?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow a healthy diet.</li> </ul>
<b>What medications will I take?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stop taking over-the-counter nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) 7 days before surgery.</li> <li>• Stop taking herbal and dietary supplements 7 days before surgery.</li> </ul>
<b>What tests, procedures, and medical devices will I have?</b>	<p><b>Presurgical testing (PST) appointment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring a list of all medications you take.</li> <li>• Bring results from medical tests done outside of MSK (if you haven’t already).</li> <li>• Bring a copy of your Health Care Proxy form (if you have one).</li> </ul>

**The night before surgery and morning of surgery:**

- Clean your neck and whole back with Hibiclens®.
- Don’t use any lotion, powder, oils, or deodorant.

**The night before surgery:**

- Don’t eat or drink anything after midnight. This includes water and gum.


- Follow your doctor’s instructions for when to stop taking anticoagulants (blood thinners), such as aspirin.

	Day of Surgery	
<b>What should I do?</b>	<p><b>The morning of surgery:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean your neck and whole back with Hibiclens.</li> <li>• Don't use any lotion, powder, oils, or deodorant.</li> </ul>	<p><b>After surgery:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow spinal precautions (no BLT) as instructed by your medical team.</li> <li>• Move to your chair about 6 hours after your surgery. A staff member must help you.</li> </ul>
<b>What can I eat and drink?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't eat or drink anything. This includes water and gum.</li> </ul>	<p><b>After surgery:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At first, you will follow a clear liquid diet.</li> <li>• You will slowly start eating solid foods, as tolerated.</li> </ul>
<b>What medications will I take?</b>	<p><b>The morning of surgery, at home:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take only the medications you were told to take. Take them with a small sip of water.</li> </ul> <p><b>In the presurgical center:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your nurse will give you medications to help with pain after surgery.</li> </ul>	<p><b>After surgery, you will get:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral and IV pain medication. You will control your IV pain medication with a patient-controlled analgesia (PCA) button.</li> <li>• Dexamethasone, if needed.</li> <li>• IV antibiotics.</li> <li>• Medications to help you have a bowel movement.</li> </ul>
<b>What tests, procedures, and medical devices will I have?</b>	<p><b>Placed before surgery:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intravenous (IV) line</li> <li>• Compression boots</li> </ul> <p><b>Placed during surgery:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urinary (Foley®) catheter</li> </ul>	<p><b>After surgery:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your Foley catheter will be removed once you can sit in your chair.</li> <li>• Your nurse and patient care technician (PCT) will check your vital signs and do neurological exams often.</li> <li>• If you're taking dexamethasone, your finger will be pricked before meals and at bedtime so your blood sugar levels can be checked. You will be given insulin, if needed.</li> </ul>

**While you're in the hospital:**

- You will wear compression boots while you're in your bed or chair, unless there's a reason for you not to.
- Once your dressing is removed, a staff member will clean your surgical site with Hibiclens every day.
- Clean your hands with hand sanitizer wipes or soap and water often.
- Use your incentive spirometer 10 times every 1 to 2 hours you're awake.
- Sit in your chair to eat all of your meals.

**Spinal Precautions**




No bending, lifting, or twisting (BLT). Read your discharge activity instructions for more information about what to do after your specific surgery.

	1 Day After Surgery	2 Days After Surgery Until Discharge
What should I do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow spinal precautions (no BLT).</li> <li>• Your bandage may be changed or removed.</li> <li>• Talk to your care team about who will be present at discharge and who will take you home.</li> <li>• A physical and occupational therapist (PT and OT) will visit you in your room. They will see how you're doing and make an exercise plan for you.</li> <li>• Be out of bed as much as you can. A staff member must help you move to your chair.</li> <li>• Walk around the unit 3 times today. A staff member must help you.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow spinal precautions (no BLT).</li> <li>• Be out of bed for longer than you were yesterday.</li> <li>• Walk around the unit 5 times today. A staff member must help you.</li> <li>• Finish planning your discharge. Your care team will help you.</li> <li>• Tell your care team the name of the pharmacy you want your prescriptions sent to.</li> <li>• Make sure your caregiver is with you for your discharge teaching.</li> <li>• Your nurse will go over your discharge medications.</li> <li>• If you need to take insulin at home, you and your caregiver will be taught how to give you an insulin injection.</li> </ul>
What can I eat and drink?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You will start your regular diet or a special diet (if needed).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep following your regular diet or a special diet (if needed).</li> </ul>
What medications will I take?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral pain medications. You will slowly stop taking IV pain medications.</li> <li>• Medications to help you have a bowel movement.</li> <li>• Blood thinner injection (shot).</li> <li>• Dexamethasone, if needed.</li> <li>• Insulin, if needed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral pain medications.</li> <li>• Medications to help you have a bowel movement.</li> <li>• Blood thinner injection.</li> <li>• Dexamethasone, if needed. You will start to slowly stop taking (taper) this medication today.</li> <li>• Insulin, if needed.</li> </ul>
What tests, procedures, and medical devices will I have?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You will have spine x-rays, if needed.</li> <li>• Your nurse and PCT will check your vital signs and do neurological exams often.</li> <li>• If you're taking dexamethasone, your finger will be pricked before meals and at bedtime so your blood sugar levels can be checked.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you're having radiation therapy after your surgery, you will have a myelogram and simulation.</li> <li>• If you're taking dexamethasone, your finger will be pricked before meals and at bedtime so your blood sugar levels can be checked.</li> </ul>

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**Spinal Precautions**



No bending, lifting, or twisting (BLT).  
 Read your discharge activity instructions for more information about what to do after your specific surgery.

## After Discharge

### What should I do?

- Don't shower for the first 2 days after your surgery. Follow your care team's instructions for cleaning your incision with Hibiclens.
- 3 days after your surgery, shower every day until your staples or sutures are removed. When you shower, let the water run over your incision. Use Hibiclens and a clean washcloth to gently clean your incision. Rinse off and use a clean towel to pat your incision dry. Keep your incision uncovered.
- Don't submerge your incision underwater (such as in a bathtub, pool, ocean, or hot tub) for at least 2 months after your surgery.
- Don't use a heating pad (either electric or microwavable) near your incision until your care team tells you it's okay.
- Don't drive until your care team tells you it's okay.
- Call your doctor's office if you have any questions or concerns.

### What can I eat and drink?

- Keep following your regular diet or a special diet (if needed).

### What medications will I take?

- Follow the medication list you got at discharge.

### What tests, procedures, and medical devices will I have?

- Your first appointment after surgery will be 3 to 4 weeks after your surgery.

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### Spinal Precautions



No bending, lifting, or twisting (BLT).

Read your discharge activity instructions for more information about what to do after your specific surgery.