

Northwest Vascular Specialists LLC

1 Hayden Bridge Springfield, OR 97477

Phone: 5418689880 Fax: 5418689920

*NWSS Carotid Endarterectomy Post-Surgery Guide

The following information is intended to guide you through your post-op recovery:

Diet:

For the first few days after your return home you should eat foods that you easily tolerate normally.

Medications:

- Medications: Follow the directions on any new prescriptions that your doctor has given you. **You likely will be placed on aspirin after your surgery.** Please discuss this with your doctor before your discharge.
- Follow the directions on any new prescriptions that your doctor has given you. You will be instructed prior to your discharge about what daily medications you will need to take when you return home.
- Pain management is an important part of your post-surgery care. You should expect some discomfort after your surgery. You may be sent home with a prescription for pain medication. It is important to take your pain medicine before to your pain becomes severe.
- PLEASE NOTE: No pain medication refills will be authorized on the weekends. If a refill is needed, the request must be made before 12:00 on Friday.
- Some side effects from the pain medications include nausea and constipation. If you experience nausea or vomiting related to your pain medications, you should stop the medication and take ibuprofen or acetaminophen for pain management.

Bowel Care:

- To prevent constipation you should drink plenty of fluids and take a stool softener daily.
- If you have not had a bowel movement within 48 hours after your return home, you should increase your fluid intake. You may use a general over-the-counter laxative (e.g. MOM or dulcolax) if necessary. Contact your physician if you have continue to difficulty with BM's or experience nausea or abdominal distention.

Incision Care:

- Showering and wetting the incision is usually permitted after 48 hours from surgery.
- You may remove the gauze dressing over your incision 48 hours after your surgery. Please leave the steri-strips in place for approximately 7-10 days.
- If your clothes irritate the incision or if you have drainage from the incision, you may leave a dry gauze dressing over your incision.

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- Please observe your incision daily for signs of infection. These signs would include: increased swelling, redness, drainage or odor. It is normal to have some swelling and bruising around your incision.
- If you have staples or stitches, they will usually be removed within 2 weeks of your surgery. You will need to make an appointment to have the staples or stitches removed.
- After the staples are removed steri-strips will be placed across the incision. Those strips should remain in place for seven to ten days. The strips will gradually loosen and come off. If they do not come off within two weeks you may remove them yourself.

Physical Activity / Exercise

- Upon your return home you should return to your normal level of physical activity.

Bathing and Showering:

- You may generally start showering 48 hours after your surgery. You may shower with your steri-strips and staples or stitches in place. Do not scrub across your steri-strips or staples. **Do not bathe in a tub for a minimum of 3 weeks after your surgery.** This includes a “hot tub”.
- If you need to shave please be careful around your incision, and avoid shaving over the incision or any sutures in the area.

Driving:

- You may drive when you no longer are taking narcotic pain medications *and* you feel you can quickly respond to situations that will not place others in jeopardy.

Return to Work:

- Your doctor should inform you of when you might return to work (usually within 1-2 weeks). Please notify our office if you need a return to work letter to your employer. It may take up to 48 hours for the letter to be completed. Please leave a fax number for your employer so we can fax your release

IMPORTANT NOTE:

- You will need to call our office promptly if you develop: any arm / leg numbness or weakness, **or** sudden changes in your vision, **or** if you develop difficulty speaking or swallowing.

Follow-up Appointments:

- You will need to return to the office for a follow-up visit usually within 2 weeks after your surgery. Please make sure you have your appointment scheduled.

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Problems to Observe For:

Call the office for the following:

1. Fever >101.0
2. Poorly controlled pain.
3. Nausea or vomiting that continues beyond 24 hours.
4. Diarrhea that continues beyond 24 hours.
5. Signs of a wound infection or healing complications.
6. Chest pain or difficulty breathing

**If you have further questions after reading this handout please contact our office.
The office is open from 9:00AM to 5:00PM Monday through Friday.**

**If you need to contact our office after usual office hours, please call the office
phone number and the answering service will contact the on-call MD.**

Rev: 2/2011