



CERVICAL/UPPER THORACIC – PRE-OPERATIVE RESTRICTIONS GUIDELINES FOLLOWING SURGERY

- **Avoid bending, lifting, and twisting** (PT will define for individual)
- Do NOT complete the same activity for 2 hours
- No **climbing, over the shoulder activity, or crawling for 3 months**
- Make frequent changes to position (avoid sitting for >30 minutes)
- Ensure proper positioning in seated and lying
- Takes breaks during activity as needed
- No excessive activity/contact sports until cleared with physician
- When can you return to work?
 - Typically, 4-12 weeks, and will be determined on individual basis with physician
- Education on and ensuring proper fitting of brace
- Follow wearing schedule prescribed by physician for brace
- **Wear brace for 4 weeks post-op during ambulation**
- **Wear brace for 4 months post-op during activities with high frequency vibration (riding in car) Lifting**

Restrictions Post-Operatively

| Post-Operative Timeline | Able to Lift Up to |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 0-4 Weeks | 8 Pounds |
| 4-8 Weeks | 16 Pounds |
| 2-4 Months | 25 Pounds |
| 4-6 Months | 35 Pounds |

Managing your pain

- Follow physician's order for medication
- Education on anatomy, nervous system, pain
- Education on tissue healing/wound inspection
- *** Consider Graded Exposure/Graded Activity***
 - Make small changes, observe symptoms for 3 days, then readjust level of activity

TRANSITION TRAINING

- Proper and safe mechanics with bed mobility, sit to stands, toileting, vehicle transfers, etc.

ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING (ADL'S)

- Identify necessary assistive devices for each patient
 - Reacher, sock-aid
- Complete ADL's with altered/safe mechanics to diminish strain on neck
- Complete ADL's and housekeeping activities abiding by guidelines and to tolerance
- Driving training (with brace) and proper use of upper extremities to limit strain on cervicothoracic spine

EXERCISES - to be determined by PT and completed to tolerance (2-3x/day)

- Complete exercises to prevent deep vein thrombus (DVT) formation up to 1-month post-op or until patient return to normal upright ambulation
 - Ankle pumps, heel slides, glute sets
- Cervical and scapular stabilizer activation
 - Chin tuck, scapular squeezes, rows, etc.
- Cervicothoracic mobility
 - Active range of motion in each plane
- Gentle stretching to shortened tissues
 - Pec stretch, upper trap stretches

INJURY PREVENTION

- Education on reducing risk for future re-injury
- No repeat offenders! 😊