

Spinal Fusion Post-operative Activity Schedule

After spinal fusion surgery you will have restrictions on physical activities. This table shows examples of what kinds of things you may do as time goes on. After 12 months, if healing goes well, you will be allowed to participate in almost any activity that does not have a high risk of impact or tackling. The surgery will not cause any problem for pregnancy or in delivery of a baby.

******Note: IF you have a brace following surgery, the body brace MUST be worn at all times, except for showering, until 4-6 months, when you will be instructed by the doctor to begin taking it off.***

At 1 week after surgery:

- You may shower, if the entire wound is clean and dry.
- You may walk
- You may lift up to 5 pounds.

At 4-6 weeks after surgery:

- You may drive, wearing brace if ordered, (as soon as you are off of pain medications)
- You may return to school or work
- You may begin some light upper body exercises (no more than 5 lb)

At 3-4 months after surgery:

- You may ride a stationary bike
- You may swim using arms and legs
- You may ride gentle rides at an amusement park.

At 6 months after surgery:

- You may shoot baskets, and other low impact non-contact, non-competitive sports
- You may begin taking Physical Education class again
- You may begin light jogging on even surfaces
- You may begin playing light, gentle tennis

At 12 months after surgery:

- You may try non-competitive volleyball
- Light, gentle dancing, no jumps or twists
- Gentle jazz/tap/ballet dancing, no jumps or twists
- You may begin gentle horseback riding (no canter or jumps)

You can ride roller-coasters

You may start bowling

You may ride horseback: lope and controlled jumping OK

You may begin competitive sports that have **no** tackling or high risk of impact
(no football, no rugby, no ice hockey)

*This might include:

Karate Aerobics class Pom Pom Squad

Baseball Cheerleading Tag Football

You may snow or water ski

Upper extremity exercises can be advanced to strength tolerance

***You are advised to always avoid activities with a high risk of impact or tackling after spinal fusion. This includes activities such as bungy-jumping, high level gymnastics, fighting, boat racing, trampoline, tackle football, rugby or ice-hockey.

Note: These are just general guidelines. Activity must be individualized for each patient using these suggestions. Please ask if you need clarification.