

Gregory F. Ricca MD, FAANS, FACS
Neurological Surgery

SEARCY MEDICAL CENTER
An Outpatient Department of
White County Medical Center

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Instructions for _____ Following Cervical Microdecompression

1. No driving for 2 weeks and only drive if you feel well enough.
2. No heavy lifting or working above your head until you have fully healed. Increase your activity as tolerated.
3. 2 weeks after surgery begin gentle stretching exercises of your neck.
4. Take your pain pills and muscle relaxants if needed but do not take more than prescribed. **We do not refill pain pills and muscle relaxants early.**
5. Do not drive or operate machinery while taking your medications.
6. **NO SMOKING!!** This greatly inhibits healing and increases the risk of infection.
7. You may shower 2 days after surgery. Prior to showering, please remove your bandage. Leave the steri-strips (the little tape strips) in place. At the end of your shower, rinse off your incision with clean water and then pat it dry. Do not soak your incision. You may place a new bandage on the incision only after it is completely dry. A clean dry wound will almost never get infected. A moist wound greatly increases the risk of infection.
8. If you experience arm pain that is worse than before your surgery, notify our office. Some pain is normal. It is also common to experience some neck, shoulder and upper back pain. This should improve with time.
9. **Notify us (call) for temperature above 101 degrees, drainage from your incision or “breaking open” of your incision.** Some swelling, hard knots, and bruising may be present. These will go away eventually.
10. Please contact us (501-278-8330) if you have any problems or questions. If you need to speak with someone after hours, call WCMC hospital and ask for the doctor on call for Dr. Ricca.
11. If you need a refill of your pain pills or muscle relaxants, please plan ahead and let us know before you run out. We are not always able to refill them the same day you call. **We do not provide prescriptions after hours or on weekends. We do not refill prescriptions early, even if they are lost or stolen.**
12. You may return to work whenever you feel able. Please contact us if you need a release to return to work prior to your follow-up appointment.
13. Your follow-up with Dr. Ricca is on _____ at _____.