

## Home Care After Scoliosis Surgery

This handout is meant to act as a guide. You will come to the clinic for x-rays and follow-up at 6 weeks, 3 months, 6 months, and one year after scoliosis surgery, and then yearly for 4 to 5 years.

### First 6 Weeks

#### Incision Care:

- The stitches will dissolve over time.
- You will be taught dressing changes before you leave the hospital.
- You will have Steri-strips (paper tape) across your incision. The Steri-strips may fall off. This is ok. You may take them off after three weeks.
- Your scar is very sensitive to sun. Use extra sunscreen on your scar if you are outside.

#### Bathing:

- Sponge baths only for 3 weeks.
- After 3 weeks you may shower.
- After 4 weeks you can soak in a bathtub.

#### Activity:

- Walk, slowly increase the distance.
- Go up and down stairs.
- **Do not** lift more than 5 pounds.
- **Do not** twist, turn, or bend.
- **Do not** drive for 6 weeks after surgery, and you are no longer using narcotic pain pills.

### 6 Weeks to 3 Months

- Walk faster.
- Ride a stationary biking.

- Climb more stairs.
- Do light aerobics 3-5 times a week.
- You may lift up to 10 pounds.
- Begin bending, twisting, and turning within your comfort zone. **Do not** lift anything when doing this.
- You may float in a pool or lake, but **no** swimming or diving.

### 3 to 6 Months

#### 3 Months:

- Light straight ahead jogging on a flat surface.
- Light swimming.

#### 4 Months:

- Increase the intensity of your jogging and swimming.
- Increase weightlifting to weights you can lift 15 times.

#### 5 to 6 Months:

Resume your normal routines. Slowly increase your time in a new activity so you can adjust to how your body is able to move.

**No** activities that place a load on the back with the back bent (i.e. jet skiing, hopping waves, snow mobiling over jumps, etc.).

The point where the fused and unfused spine meets can be damaged.

#### Who to Call

Please talk with your doctor about your plan of care. For questions, please call: **(608) 263-6420**.