Lumbar Laminectomy
REHABILITATION PROTOCOL

Phase I: Protection Phase/Immediate Motion (0 – 6 Weeks post-op)

0-3 Weeks post-op:
- No PT for the first 3 weeks unless otherwise specified by physician
- Gradual return to ADL’s at home
- MD follow up at 3 weeks post op to clear for PT

3-6 Weeks post-op:
- Begin walking program: 3 x’s 30 min/day: avoid excessive lumbar flexion or extension
- Manage pain and swelling/modalities prn
- Monitor wounds for breakdown or infection
- Light resistance upper/lower extremity exercises: 0-5 lbs.
  - Lumbopelvic stabilization in neutral spine
  - Focus on addressing baseline weakness (i.e footdrop)
  - Posture training
- Home program review/posture education
- Avoid excessive lumbar flexion and extension
- Okay to start PROM or stretching of cervical spine
- Initiate neutral spine core stability training on treatment table: hook lying TA training, diaphragmatic breathing, lumbar multifidi training, etc.
- Soft tissue mobility prn
- Increase activity tolerance

Phase II: Intermediate Phase (6 -12 Weeks post-op)

6-12 Weeks post-op:
- Initiate non-impact cardiovascular activities with neutral spine: Arc, Elliptical, Upright bike
- Manage pain and swelling, modalities prn
- Begin neural glides/mobilizations. Do not reproduce symptoms
- Progress UE/LE strengthening: increase strength and activity tolerance
- Continue neutral spine core stability training on mat. Okay to initiate sitting and standing neutral spine stability training.
- Continue soft tissue mobility
- May begin grade I-II joint mobilizations on spinal segments. No joint mobilizations within 2 segments adjacent to laminectomy.
12-15 Weeks post-op:
- Continue non-impact cardiovascular activities
- Progress UE/LE strengthening
- Initiate sagittal plane core stability training. Gradually progress flexion/extension.
- Continue soft tissue mobility, modalities, as needed
- Continue joint mobilizations on spinal segments. **No** joint mobilizations within 2 segments adjacent to laminectomy

**Phase III: Advanced Strengthening Phase (12 - 16 Weeks post-op)**

16 Weeks post-op:
- Continue cardio equipment as tolerated, progress slowly to straight line jogging
- Introduce core training in transverse and frontal planes progressing to multi planar
- Un-restricted upper/lower body strengthening.
- Progress to straight line jogging
- Initiate plyometric program

16 Weeks post-op:
- Continue with all ROM, flexibility, stretching, strengthening and plyometric exercises
- Initiate interval sport program if applicable after consultation with physician

**Phase IV: Return to Activity Phase (16 – 24 weeks post-op)**
- Continue with established strength and flexibility programs
- Continue to comply to interval sport program with gradual return to recreation/sport
- Criteria for return to play:
  - Satisfactory ROM, Strength, and Clinical Exam
  - Satisfactory completion of interval sport program
  - Physician approval