

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.



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12-15 Weeks post-op:

- ❑ Continue non-impact cardiovascular activities
- ❑ Progress UE/LE strengthening
- ❑ Initiate saggital 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



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