

GUIDELINES FOR LIFESTYLE AFTER CERVICAL SURGERY

Note: These are designed as general guidelines. If an exercise or activity causes pain either leave it out or do it more gently.

General

- Look after your back
- Bend your knees, not your back
- Log roll in and out of bed as you were taught in hospital
- Try to keep you back straight and head upright during activities
- Do not lift any items above your shoulders
- Do not lift and turn at the same time
- Avoid lifting anything heavier than 2-3 kilograms

Personal Care

- Choose clothes that fasten at the front instead of pulling over the head; stand up to dry upper body.
- Sit down to dry lower body
- Sit down to cut toenails
- Avoid bending over
- To wash face, use a washer
- To clean your teeth, use a glass to rinse your mouth

Dressing

- Try to choose clothes that fasten at the front, instead of pulling over the head
- A dressing stick may be useful for zips
- Sit down to put on underwear, trousers and stockings

Meal Preparation

- Avoid bending, lifting or stretching your back
- Avoid lifting heavy saucepans, slide them across the benches
- Double handles distribute the load more evenly
- Use lightweight colander for draining vegetables or serve straight from the pot using a perforated spoon
- A pick up stick may be useful
- Washing up, it may be easier to use a bowl on the bench if a sink causes you to bend

Cleaning

- Avoid heavy cleaning including heavy vacuuming and scrubbing
- For low level jobs, use long handled appliances

Laundry

- Avoid bending and twisting of your back when pulling clothes out of baskets and washing machines
- Do not lift out a bundle of clothes, separate them first

Driving

- Avoid driving unless you discuss this with your doctor at your first check up appointment

Ironing

- If possible leave it set up all the time
- Store iron in cupboard within easy reach
- Remember to turn your whole body and feet when removing clothes from basket

Gardening

- Best done in moderation
- Avoid bending and twisting movements
- Kneel on one knee when weeding
- Use long handled tools to reduce amount of bending

Shopping

- Home delivery, most supermarkets will deliver to your home
- Avoid heavy shopping bags and trolleys
- If it is essential to carry a shopping bag, divide the weight evenly into 2 bags, one on each arm

Wound Care

- If your staples/sutures have not been removed, keep dressing dry until removal
- If staples/sutures are removed there is no need for a dressing. Sometimes Steri-strips are used – these can be removed in a couple of days or as instructed by your nurse.



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