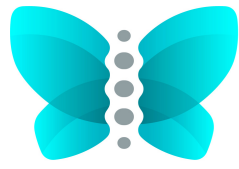


# MANAGING EXPECTATIONS



inspired  
spine

Inspired Spine surgeons provide the best spine care possible; however, we cannot make you younger, so it is important to manage expectations.



# BEFORE SURGERY

We are Here for You

## WHAT TO EXPECT

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*To help expedite the authorization process, we ask that patients assist in the retrieval of their medical records from their physical therapist, chiropractor, primary care provider and any other institutions that have provided them care along their spine journey.*

### **Unexpected Nature of Surgery Scheduling:**

We are one of the only clinics offering OLLIF in the country; it may take several months to get you scheduled. There are several reasons your surgery may be canceled or rescheduled: abnormalities during your preop physical, need for cardiac clearance, and hospital bed space are some of those reasons. The prior authorization process is lengthy and may require extensive medical record history. Your patience is much appreciated.

### **Appeals:**

If your payer denies your procedure, we will continue to appeal on your behalf, but payers may take up to 90 business days to process appeals.

### **Pain Management Before Surgery:**

Although we rarely prescribe medication prior to surgery, we do offer some pain management solutions, and have a PM&R on site that is available for appointments. If you would like to know your options for pain control while awaiting your surgery or would like a referral to a pain management specialist, please discuss with your provider.



# YOU ARE STILL HAVING SURGERY

Even though it is minimally invasive

Although our OLLIF is minimally invasive and the recovery is usually much quicker than with open surgery, it is still a spine fusion, which is a major procedure. You will have pain afterward and feel as if you had a serious surgery because you did! Minimally invasive surgery means that your recovery will be much smoother than the open surgery alternative. It does not mean that you will be pain-free directly after surgery, or in the weeks to follow. Everyday activities should be okay to do sooner than with a traditional open back surgery.

"Everyday activities" means things like walking around, using a computer, sitting in a chair and lying down. It DOES NOT mean that you will be back to your old lifestyle right away. You cannot do excessive activities like lift weights, climb ladders, ride motorcycles, rock climb, ski or snowboard until your spine is fully fused. The fusion will likely not be solid until at least 6 months post op and, in many cases, 1 year. Healing and fusion progress will be delayed if you use any form of nicotine or have other medical conditions such as diabetes or osteoporosis.

# After Your SURGERY



## RESTRICTIONS

- Wear brace and/or collar when out of bed and walking around
- Make frequent position changes, taking breaks as needed
- DO NOT do the same activity for more than 2 hours
- NO climbing, crawling, kneeling or over the shoulder activities

## B L T

Remember this acronym "BLT"  
Do NOT bend, lift more than 8 lbs or twist. We would like you to keep your back (hips to shoulders) as straight as possible during the healing process.



## PAIN

Back pain is expected after surgery and may not be 100% alleviated by prescriptions. It is common to experience a temporary increase of pain down one or both of your legs. Stool softeners are recommended for constipation from pain medications. Use the prescription refill line for refill requests: **612-474-4993**. We require **3 business days** to process prescription requests.

## WOUND CARE

- Keep your dressing clean and dry, and leave this on for 2-3 days after surgery; if it is still draining, cover with a clean sterile dressing. Once draining has ceased, you may keep it open to air.
- Some drainage is normal, if there is heavy bleeding, apply firm pressure and call Inspired Spine.
- Leave steri strips (multiple small pieces of tape) on until they begin to fall off on their own.
- It is safe for the incision to get slightly wet while taking a shower, avoid any direct pressure from the shower head and do not scrub the area. Lightly pat the site dry with a clean towel.
- No baths, swimming pools, hot tubs or lakes until your one month post-op appointment.

**Further instructions regarding Restrictions and Return to Work status will be discussed at your one-month post-op appointment.**

# RISK OF NERVE IRRITATION



There is a 15% chance of developing nerve root irritation after your surgery. Sometimes symptoms start 3-7 days after surgery (after the steroids have worn off) and can last for several weeks.

## **What causes this?**

In order for the surgeon to gain access to the area of your spine that needs to be corrected, he/she must gently move the nerve out of the way. If you had nerve irritation prior to surgery, you are more likely to have increased nerve irritation after surgery. The irritation after surgery is caused by inflammation and swelling near the nerve. Your surgeon will most likely use a left sided approach for an OLLIF surgery; this is why the nerve irritation is located in your left lower extremity. It is rare that nerve irritation does not get better within a few months.

## **Symptoms of Nerve Irritation:**

- Increased nerve pain in the leg. Most commonly noticed in the thigh, calf and top of the foot.
- Feelings of "electric shock", "zapping" or "shooting pain" running down the left leg. These symptoms may get worse before improving. This is a promising sign that the nerves are starting the healing process.

## **What can I do to relieve the pain?**

- A Medrol dose pack and/or gabapentin may be prescribed to help relieve your pain.
- This type of nerve pain typically responds well to an epidural steroid injection (ESI). This can be ordered to help relieve the swelling and inflammation in the area.

*During your procedure, you will have interoperative neuromonitoring. This monitoring serves to protect the nerve from damage.*

# ADDITIONAL POINTS

## Things to Keep in Mind

**Patients with degenerative back issues** tend to have several health concerns. While the OLLIF procedure is state-of-the-art and can reduce your pain, pathologies in the lumbar spine may not be your only issue. If you have other issues (SI joint disease, arthritis, chronic pain) these are not going to resolve with one surgery. You may need further treatment or surgery for other issues after OLLIF. It will be important at follow-up appointments to identify if you are experiencing the exact same pain you had prior to the surgery, or if it is a new, or different pain.

**Pain Medication** is discontinued 90 days, or sooner, following your surgery. If you require further pain management, we have an on-site PM&R, or we can refer you to a pain specialist. It is especially likely that you will require further pain management if you were on chronic pain medication prior to your surgery.

**Sexual activity** in the supine position (lying on your back) can be resumed 4 – 6 weeks after surgery, as long as the spine precautions of no bending, lifting, or twisting (BLT) are maintained. Talk to your provider and physical therapist regarding this.

**We are committed to science and research**, so all patients consent to having their de-identified data (HIPAA compliant) used for future research. We will get additional consent if we want a video testimonial.

## Frequently Asked

# QUESTIONS

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### WILL I LOSE MOBILITY AFTER MY FUSION?

By the time you need surgery, the motion in your back has likely significantly decreased. After surgery, most patients do not notice any additional decrease in mobility, but often experience an increase in mobility when their pain is resolved. Most bending motion comes from our hip joints. Physical therapy will be able to guide you through this.

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### WILL I BE ABLE TO RIDE MY MOTORCYCLE, RUN MARATHONS, DO BACKFLIPS, ETC?

While we can't make you younger or perform miracles, we do hope to get you back to ADLs and reasonable activity for your age group.

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### WHEN AM I OK TO FLY OR TRAVEL AFTER SURGERY?

Lifting and walking long distances can be too much stress in the first month. You are safe to ride in the car for long periods if you stop every few hours to stretch your legs, walk around, do some ankle pumps, and prevent stiffness.

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### IS THIS MY LAST BACK SURGERY?

There may be more than one issue that needs to be addressed. The surgeon may do the smallest surgery possible to give you the best benefit for now. It is possible that you may develop adjacent segment disease, re-herniation, or have another area of your spine that needs to be addressed in the future.

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### WHEN CAN I GO BACK TO WORK?

Returning to work is determined on a case by case status. Physically demanding jobs may require more time off before returning to work, whereas those working desk jobs may be able to return to work more quickly. Regardless of one's job conditions, you must be cleared by the physician before returning to work. This conversation takes place at the post-op follow up which is done around 1 month following the surgery.

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Using your phone, scan the QR code. Watch all of the videos in the playlist and sign on the line below indicating you understand each video.



## ALL you need to know about LIF's and spinal fusions

I have watched the video, I understand and have no questions

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## Nerve Root Irritation

I have watched the video, I understand and have no questions

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## 1 Hour After OLLIF Leg Pain is Gone

I have watched the video, I understand and have no questions

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## Sometimes it takes a while for pain to go away

I have watched the video, I understand and have no questions

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## Natural History of the Spine

I have watched the video, I understand and have no questions

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## SI Fusion is the Miracle that Took the Leg Pain Away

I have watched the video, I understand and have no questions

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## Radiculopathy Gone but Patient has SIJ Disease

I have watched the video, I understand and have no questions

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## Patient Expectation All you Need to Know

I have watched the video, I understand and have no questions

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## Explaining the Pain that Remains After Surgery

I have watched the video, I understand and have no questions

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## Setting Expectations- We Cannot Make You 30 Again

I have watched the video, I understand and have no questions

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