Lumbar Spine Surgery Exercises – Acute Post-Op Phase I

It is important to use good breathing techniques with all exercises. When you breathe, you should feel your stomach push out when you inhale and move inward when you exhale. Your shoulders, neck and jaw should be relaxed when you are breathing.

1. Abdominal Brace
   **Position:** Lying down, sitting or standing
   **Action:** Place fingers on stomach. Tighten abdominal muscles as if to force your fingers out of your abdomen. Practice tightening on sides of abdomen and high and low on abdomen.

   Do ______ sets of ______ repetitions ______ times per day.

   Use abdominal bracing and good breathing techniques throughout the following exercises.

2. Ankle Pumps/Neuro Stretch
   **Position:** Lying down, with knees straight.
   **Action:** Pull foot up towards your face until you feel a slight stretch and then point foot down as far as possible.

   Do ______ repetitions ______ times per day.

3. Quad Sets
   **Position:** Lying down.
   **Action:** Tighten the muscles on the top of the thigh to allow the back of the knee to press into surface or towel.

   Repeat _____ times. Do _____ times per day.

4. Heel Slides/Hip and Knee Flexion
   **Position:** Lying down.
   **Action:** While maintaining abdominal brace, slowly bend knee by sliding heel up toward buttock. Do not lift heel from surface. Slowly return to starting position. Keep kneecap pointing up towards ceiling.

   Repeat _____ times. Do _____ times per day.
5. Bent Knee Fall Outs

**Position:** Lying down; Keep one leg straight and the other leg with foot on floor with knee bent. Put hands on pelvis to monitor motion.

**Action:** Let the knee fall out to the side. The back and pelvis should not move.

Repeat _____ times. Do _____ times per day.

6. Lumbar Spine Neural Mobilization – Sitting

**Position:** Sit in a chair in good upright posture, not leaning on back of chair.

**Action:**
1. Lift your _____ foot off of the floor and straighten the knee.
2. Keep your trunk straight.
3. Hold _____ seconds.
4. Return to start position. Repeat _____ times.
5. Lift foot off floor again and straighten knee.
6. Move foot up and down. Repeat _____ times.

7. Sitting PNF Upper Extremity Diagonals

**Position:** Sitting or standing

**Action:** Cross arms across chest with fist at pocket height while maintaining abdominal brace; raise arms over head, forming the letter “V.” Do not allow your back to move.

Repeat _____ times. Do _____ times per day.

8. Sitting Scapular Sets

**Position:** Sitting or standing

**Action:** Pinch shoulder blades together. Avoid shrugging shoulders up or flaring chest out. Hold 3 - 5 seconds and relax.

Repeat _____ times. Do _____ times per day.

When instructed by your therapist, you should begin a walking program (X44916) and add standing leg exercises (X24510).

The information presented is intended for general information and educational purposes. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care provider. Contact your health care provider if you believe you have a health problem.