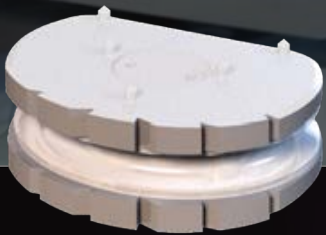





POST-OPERATIVE  
PROTOCOL  
AFTER TOTAL DISC  
REPLACEMENT / DISC FUSION



LUMBAR

GROUP  
**FH ORTHO**<sup>™</sup>



## POST-OPERATIVE PROTOCOL AFTER TOTAL DISC REPLACEMENT/ DISC FUSION

### **Dear patient,**

This protocol has been prepared to remind you of the important recommendations after total disc replacement or disc fusion using cages.

After surgery, it is important to be conservative with your authorized daily activities and not to rush back this way you'll ensure safe recovery.

Surgeons need to inform each patient for specific protocol adapted to them.

Surgeons recommendations must always prevail over this protocol.

Durations indicated in this protocol may vary according to the patients or specific indications.

Anyway, surgeons recommendations prevail over this protocol which is only a guideline.



## GENERAL

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- An adaptable lumbar brace may be recommended as soon as standing up.
- Your individual pain threshold determines the speed of your mobilization. Please mind your body.
- Walking: as soon as possible after surgery.



## NOT ALLOWED FOR THE FIRST 3 MONTHS

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- Forced impulsive manipulation of your spine.
- No crunches
- No sit-ups
- No sitting on the floor
- No squat position



## SITTING

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- **1 week after surgery:** not sitting.
- **6 weeks after surgery:** sitting upright (back and legs perpendicular ۹۰°).
- **Only sit if problems do not arise. Start by sitting for only a short time (for 15 minutes 3-4 times daily).** You should take frequent breaks in sitting, even later on, and change position times daily).



## MOVEMENT

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- For 6 weeks holding the back unnaturally stiff when standing.
- From the 6<sup>th</sup> week after surgery the spine can be gradually moved when standing.
- Stiffness is detrimental to the eventual resilience of your spine.



## WASHING

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- Shower: the day after having the stitches removed.
- Use a waterproof plaster for stitches for showering.
- Bathing: from 6<sup>th</sup> week after surgery.



## LIFTING

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- **6-8 weeks after surgery:** weights up to 2kg.
- **4-6 months after surgery:** weights up to 5kg.
- Remember to always keep your lumbar spine extended when lifting, to tense your abdominal muscles and breathe out.



## DRIVING

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- As passenger from 14 days after surgery.
- As driver after authorization by your surgeon.
- At the beginning, have frequent stops for exercise breaks.
- Use lumbar support (cushions, lumbar bulge).



## PHYSIOTHERAPY (ONLY IF AND WHEN AUTHORIZED BY YOUR SURGEON)

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- **For the first 6 months after surgery:**
  - developing the core muscles with tension exercises (isometric).
  - relaxation (massage, heat treatment).
- **From 6 months after surgery:**
  - increasing mobilisation of the spine
  - do stretching exercises: the hamstrings, quadriceps and trapezius muscles (i.e. the muscle of the thighs) tend to be shortened. This would bring your spine in suboptimal position.



## MATTRESS

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- It is not necessary to have a special mattress.



## RETURN TO WORK

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- Different for each activity, your doctor will give you advices.



## WORKPLACE

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- **Ergonomic transformation may be needed:**
  - making it possible to sit upright (back and thigh perpendicular)
  - raising the table, if necessary standing desk.
- **Take frequent exercise breaks for example occasional standing exercises.**



## SEXUALITY

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- **Disc replacement or disc fusion require taking precautions during sexual relations: ask your surgeon.**
- **Avoid every forced or painfull movement**



## MEDICATION

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- Pain medication as prescribed by your surgeon.



## OUTPATIENT AFTERCARE

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- **Regular wound checks.**
- **Reduction/phasing out of pain medication.**
- **Removal of stitches from the 10<sup>th</sup> day after surgery.**



## TOILETS

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- **Wear your brace or hold both hands on your belly while sitting on the toilets.**



## SPORTS

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- **Swimming:** 6 months after surgery (all styles except butterfly).
- **Jogging:** after 6 months.
- **Cycling:** after 12 weeks with high handlebars.
- **Strength training:** after 6 months, initially with qualified supervision. Mixed strength/ endurance training (small weights, high number of repetitions).
- **Squash, skiing, tennis, golf:** after 6 months (if problem-free, after good preparation, after consultation with a doctor).





## NOTES

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