



Royal Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Patient Information

Microdiscectomy

Welcome to the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital (ROH).
For further information please visit www.roh.nhs.uk

About microdiscectomy/small decompression

People having a microdiscectomy or decompression tend to suffer with leg pain due to pressure on one or more of the nerves around your spine. The surgery which you have had involves removing part of one or more of the discs (microdiscectomy) or removing a small piece of bone from your spine (decompression). This aims to remove pressure from the nerves which may have been causing you to have leg pain. It is not aimed at relieving back pain.

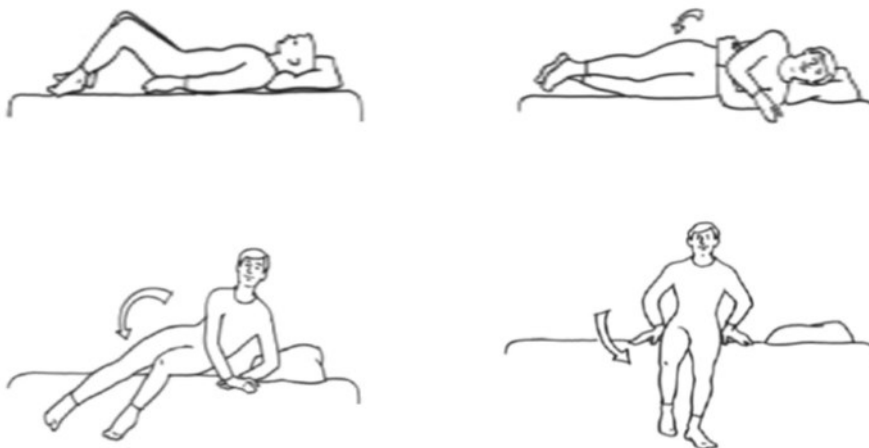
What should I expect afterwards?

You will be encouraged to get up and walk about within a few hours of your operation. Some patients are discharged on the day of surgery and most by the following day. Operations on more than one disc or at several levels in the spine may result in you staying in hospital a little longer. If required you will be seen by a physiotherapist on the ward to ensure that you can get in and out of bed and mobilise safely. Not everyone needs to be seen by physiotherapy following your surgery therefore you can find more information in this leaflet on the common queries that patients have following surgery.

Getting out of bed

It is important to get out of bed as instructed by your physiotherapist (Log Roll) or described below. This ensures your back is in the correct position whilst you recover from your surgery.

Roll onto your side



When will my physiotherapy start?

You may be seen by a physiotherapist prior to your discharge from hospital, if not all the information you require is in this leaflet. They will show you how to get of bed and demonstrate exercises you should do following your surgery. The exercises aim to restore mobility and strengthen your muscles as well as increasing your fitness. These exercises should be done at least twice a day. You may experience some discomfort in your back when doing these exercises. This is normal and to be expected. If you start to get numbness, pins and needles or pain in either leg, stop exercising. If your leg symptoms persist for more than a few days consult your surgeon.

Exercises

Your physiotherapist will explain and demonstrate the following exercises to you. You may feel a little discomfort whilst doing the exercises although they should not provoke pain in your leg. Each exercise must be done at least twice each day. You may choose to do them all together or break them up into smaller, more manageable sessions. Make sure you take regular walks throughout the day, gradually build up the distance as able.

General Advice

1. Avoid slumping when sitting. Try to maintain a good posture. Try to avoid sitting for long periods (initially no longer than 20 minutes). Then gradually build up the length of time as comfortable
2. Walk as far as you are comfortable within the limits of your pain.
3. Lifting needs to be undertaken with caution for the first 6 weeks especially in the first few weeks. Avoid heavy objects and note lighter but more bulky objects may cause as much trouble as smaller heavier objects.
4. You may start swimming at 4 weeks (if your wound has healed). If you are unsure about this ask your physiotherapist or the nurse at your doctors.

Pain Relief

It is normal to feel some pain after your surgery and you will be provided with some painkillers to help with this. It is important to take these as prescribed to keep pain to a minimum.

When can I return to work?

This will depend on the type of work you do. Discuss with your surgeon when you can return to work. As a guide, office based jobs can return to work at 4 weeks, light manual work 6-8 weeks and longer for heavy manual work.

When can I drive?

Generally you are not allowed to drive for 4 weeks following your surgery. Discuss this with your surgeon.

Leisure/Sport

This will also depend on the extent of the surgery you have had and what activities you want to return to. Your Consultant or physiotherapist can advise you further on this.

Other information

If you have any questions or need any advice about your exercises then please contact the Physiotherapy Department between 8:00am—4:00pm Monday to Friday on 0121 685 4120.

Instructions for after your surgery:-

Personal Exercise Program

Microdiscectomy / Small Decompression

Royal Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Royal Orthopaedic Hospital
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[Video](#)

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Standing.

Bend sideways at the waist keeping your back staright. This will help to restore the movement in your back.

Repeat 10 times.



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[Video](#)

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Stand in front of a step/bottom stair.

Step up 15 times with one leg leading and then repeat with the other leg leading.

This will help to strengthen your leg muscles.



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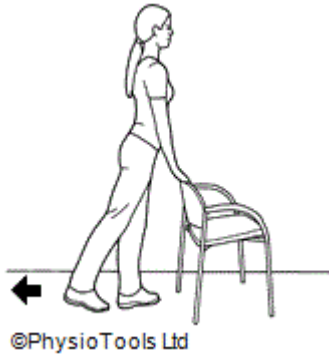
[Video](#)

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Stand leaning with your back against a wall and your feet about 20 cm from the wall.

Slowly slide down the wall until your hips and knees are slightly bent. Return to starting position. This will help to strengthen your leg muscles.

Repeat 10 times.



[Video](#)

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Stand straight holding on to a chair.

Bring your leg backwards keeping your knee straight. Do not lean forwards. This will help to strengthen your leg muscles.

Repeat 10 times.



[Video](#)

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Lying on your back with knees bent.

Squeeze your buttocks together and slowly lift your bottom off the floor. Slowly return to starting position. This will help to strengthen your buttocks and core muscles.

Repeat 10 times.