RESTRICTIONS FOLLOWING BACK FUSION

These physical therapy restrictions will gradually change as your fusion becomes solid and you begin to come out of your brace. At that point, your restrictions will depend upon your individual needs. Each patient progresses differently. Ask your doctor, one of the physician assistants, or one of the physical therapists if you are not clear about your restrictions as they change.

REMEMBER:

- Keep your brace on, except to shower.
- When your brace is off, do not sit, bend, or twist.
- Do not bend over, either from standing or sitting.
- Limit upright sitting to 20 minutes.
- Sit reclined as long as you like.
- Do not lift more than 5-10 pounds.
- Limit hip flexion to 90° and keep knees lower than your hips.

MOVING AROUND

The following is a summary of guidelines provided by our Physical Therapy Department that you should follow when moving around after surgery. If you have any questions about these guidelines – or the appropriateness of any other activities – please call Orthopaedic Specialists of North Carolina @ (919) 497-0445.

MOVING FROM STAND TO SIT (AND SIT TO STAND)

Before you sit down, always make sure that the surface on which you plan to sit is stable.

1. Back up to the seat until it touches the back of your knees.
2. Lower yourself straight down so that you are perched on the edge of the seat.
3. Slide back until you are positioned correctly in the chair.

The most important thing to remember about moving from sit to stand is that you should not bend forward when lowering yourself to the chair. **Forward bending is not permitted.**

When you are ready to stand up, reverse the process:

1. Slide to the edge of the seat.
2. Pull your feet back so they are directly under you.
3. Stand straight up.

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**GETTING INTO BED**

1. Sit on the edge of the bed and slide back.
2. Use the arm that is closest to the head of the bed and lower yourself down onto the elbow and forearm.
3. Place the opposite hand in front of your chest, on the bed.
4. Move your bottom arm towards your ear and lower yourself down with the top one. Your feet should still be dangling off the bed at this point.
5. Place your feet onto the bed and roll onto your back like a log.

**GETTING OUT OF BED**

1. Roll over onto your side, facing the side of the bed from which you plan to get up. Get close to the side. (Remember: Your bottom arm should be overhead, lying flat next to the ear.)
2. Bend your hips and knees so that your lower legs are dangling off the bed.
3. Place your top hand flat down on the bed in front of your chest.
4. Push your torso up with that hand until you can prop up on the forearm of the bottom arm.
5. Use the bottom arm to push yourself the rest of the way up.
6. Slide to the edge of the bed and move from sitting to standing (as instructed previously).

**BED MOBILITY: SIDE-TO-SIDE MOVEMENT**

1. Lie on your back, bend your knees, and place your feet flat on the bed.
2. Move your shoulders slightly over.
3. Lift your buttocks by pressing down with your feet and your hands.
4. Move your hips.
5. Move your feet.

You can repeat this motion as many times as you need to move yourself the desired distance.

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**BED MOBILITY: ROLLING**

When you roll in the bed, you must roll like a log. Your hips and shoulders need to move **together**.

1. Lie flat on your back
2. Lift your right arm overhead and lay it close to your right ear.
3. Bend your left knee and place the left foot flat on the bed, close to the right knee.
4. Push yourself over onto right side with your left foot, keeping the hips and shoulders moving together.

To roll onto your stomach, follow the steps above and push yourself all the way over.

To roll from your stomach to your back:

1. Lift your right arm overhead and lay it close to your right ear.
2. Use your left foot and left hand to roll yourself onto your right side, and then onto your back.

Of course, if you want to roll onto your left side follow the steps for rolling to the right, but lift your left arm overhead and push with your right foot.

**GETTING UP AND DOWN FROM THE FLOOR**

It is safe for you to move from standing to lying on the floor, but you should not try this unless there is a sturdy piece of furniture to lean on for support.

**To get down on the floor**

1. Roll over onto your stomach.
2. Place your hands flat on the floor under your shoulders, and get into the hands and knees position.
3. Reach your hand for the support of the furniture and move into the kneeling position.
4. Place one foot in front of you and stand up.

**You can also try this alternative method:**

1. Roll over onto your side.
2. Push up into a sitting position. You will be sitting on your heels.
3. Using hand support, move into a kneeling position.
4. Place one foot in front of you and stand up.

*If you have any questions about these guidelines – or the appropriateness of any other activities – please call Orthopaedic Specialists of North Carolina at (919) 497-0445.*