

## About Your Surgery

You are scheduled for a **posterior spine fusion** on \_\_\_\_\_.

Before the surgery gets started, the anesthesiologist will use special medication that will make you sleep through the entire surgery. You will not wake up until the surgery is over. The surgery usually takes 4-8 hours to complete. As you probably already know, your surgeon will place 1-2 rods in your back to straighten the spine. The rods will be held in place with screws, hooks and wire. The surgeon will also place bone graft over the spine to stimulate the process of bone fusion. It will take 4-6 months for your spine to heal. During surgery, you will be monitored closely to watch for any changes in your nerves that control movement and sensation. This is a safety measure to limit the chance of nerve injury during surgery. You will have monitor leads placed on your abdomen, arms and legs so we can monitor your nerve function. These will be removed after surgery.

Your surgeon will talk to your family in the family waiting room when surgery is done. Around this time, you will be moved to the Recovery Room where you will wake up. During this time, we will be getting you more comfortable with the use of your pain medication. When you are awake, your parents or guardians will be allowed to be with you in the Recovery Room. After 1-2 hours in the Recovery Room, you will be moved to the 12<sup>th</sup> floor General Care Unit.

You may notice a few things that are used to help with your care after surgery. These include:

**IV**--used to give you fluid until you are able to drink enough liquids and as a route to give you medicines so you don't have to get shots.

**Drain**--this is a thin tube placed near the incision to collect blood drainage so your bandages don't have to be changed too often. The drain is usually removed on Day 2.

**Foley catheter**--this is a thin tube placed into your bladder when you are asleep to collect urine so you don't have to get up to go to the bathroom. This catheter is usually removed on Day 3.

**Bandage**--there will be a long bandage taped over your spine incision. It is usually changed every 2-3 days. You will have dissolving sutures under the skin with steri-strips on the skin.

**Incentive Spirometer**--this is a very important, hand held device that you breathe into to get your lungs breathing deeply. You will be asked to do this 10 times every hour while awake to prevent pneumonia.

**Diet**--after surgery your stomach and GI system will not be fully awake and functioning. You will start having ice chips and sips of water after surgery. As your stomach tolerates liquids, we will slowly advance your diet back to solid food.

**Turning and moving**—you will be helped to change your position in bed every 2 hours. This is important to keep you more comfortable and to prevent pressure on your skin. The physical therapist will start working with you the first day after surgery to get you moving.