

Spinal Surgery - Primary Posterior Decompression of Lumbar Spine NEC - Primary Decompression Operations On Lumbar Spine

Introduction

The COVID pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS' ability to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would like and that it is not always possible to say when treatment will take place. This document provides our patients with information on how you can support yourself while waiting for treatment at the hospital. The guidance has been written by the clinicians who are responsible for your care.

A spinal decompression is an operation carried out on patients with spinal stenosis. Spinal stenosis is a narrowing of the space available for the nerves in the spinal canal and it is caused by age related wear and tear in your lower back. The spinal canal can become so tight (stenotic) that the nerves become compressed. This nerve compression can cause pain and other symptoms in your legs, particularly on walking. The aim of a spinal decompression is to make more space for the nerves in your lower back to prevent your symptoms from getting any worse. Following surgery, most patients get complete relieve of their leg pain. A spinal decompression is not generally an operation for back pain.

Guidance for Patients

Whilst waiting for surgery you should try and remain as active and mobile as you are able. If you are struggling with pain, then you should continue with the pain relief that your GP has prescribed for you. If your pain management is not sufficient, then please review your medication with your GP.

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

If your symptoms are deteriorating, then please contact your consultant's secretary on the number below.

Many patients have a combination of back, leg pain, leg numbness and weakness. Whilst these symptoms can be distressing for patients but don't necessarily require emergency medical attention.

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

A rare but serious condition, called Cauda Equina Syndrome, can lead to permanent damage or disability. A patient with Cauda Equina Syndrome would require emergency surgery to minimise the risk of permanent problems. As such, should you develop any of the following warning signs of Cauda Equina Syndrome you should seek urgent medical attention.

Cauda Equina Syndrome Warning Signs

- Loss of feeling/pins and needles between your inner thighs or genitals
- Numbness in or around your back passage or buttocks
- Altered feeling when using toilet paper to wipe yourself
- Increasing difficulty when you try to urinate
- Increasing difficulty when you try to stop or control your flow of urine
- Loss of sensation when you pass urine
- Leaking urine or recent need to use pads
- Not knowing when your bladder is either full or empty
- Inability to stop a bowel movement or leaking
- Loss of sensation when you pass a bowel motion
- Change in ability to achieve an erection or ejaculate
- Loss of sensation in genitals during sexual intercourse

Contact Us

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