

**PRE-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS
THERMAL ANNULOPLASTY**

If your Pain Management physician has ordered and THERMAL ANNULOPLASTY procedure for you, please follow these instructions:

- As soon as you have received a call from the Pain Clinic with a date for your THERMAL ANNULOPLASTY procedure, please call the physical therapy provider to set up two (2) appointments. You **MUST** see a physical therapist who has been trained in our rehabilitation protocol. Our schedulers can assist you with finding the right therapist. One appointment should take place one to two weeks before your procedure. The second appointment should be scheduled for six (6) weeks after your THERMAL ANNULOPLASTY. It is important that you use these time frames because of a sixty day limit your insurance may impose.

- You will also need to obtain the THERMAL ANNULOPLASTY back brace that has been prescribed. You will receive a prescription as part of the scheduling process for the procedure. You will need to obtain this brace before your procedure because you will need to wear it home the day of your procedure. The brace can be obtained from Hangar Orthopedic and Tucson Limb and Brace. **PLEASE BRING THIS BRACE WITH YOU TO YOUR THERMAL ANNULOPLASTY PROCEDURE.**

- You will need to obtain your post-discography CT films prior to your procedure. You will need to call the facility and make arrangements to pick them up at your convenience. **PLEASE BRING YOUR CT FILMS WITH YOU TO YOUR THERMAL ANNULOPLASTY PROCEDURE.**

- You may take your usual pain and other medications the day of your procedure, except for blood thinners and diabetic medications. If you take either of these medications you will be given specific instructions as to how to handle those, seperately.

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS THERMAL ANNULOPLASTY

ACTIVITY RESTRICTIONS – DOs AND DON'Ts FOR THE FIRST SIX WEEKS

- Wear your back brace as much as you can for the first six weeks. You may take it off at night.
- Rest the first three days after the THERMAL ANNULOPLASTY procedure. You are not restricted to bedrest, but no bending, lifting, standing or sitting for more than 30 minutes at a time.
- After the first three days:
 - You may begin walking for exercise
 - Do not sit longer than 30 minutes at a time
 - You may return to light activity and light duty work, as you are able to tolerate without increasing pain or fatigue
 - Avoid sudden or frequent bending or twisting
 - Do not lift anything over 15 pounds
 - You may drive after three days if your pain level is mild. If it is still moderate to severe at 3 days post-procedure, wait to drive until it becomes mild.
- If pain increases in intensity or is severe, wait until your pain level has decreased enough to work with reasonable comfort. The same is true for driving. **Use good sense:** if a particular activity increases your pain, wait a few more days before resuming that activity.
- After one week, you may begin light housework. You may lift up to 30 pounds. You may resume gentle pool exercises if you had been doing these before surgery. Do not swim laps for exercise.

ACTIVITY RESTRICTIONS – SECOND SIX WEEKS

- You may discontinue using the back brace
- You will have a "check up with your doctor and the physical therapist.
- Increase your exercise routine, involving upper body, leg strengthening and lumbar stabilization exercised on a daily basis as instructed by your physical therapist
- You may begin swimming laps for exercise
- You may begin riding the exercise bike. Again, **use good sense:** if a particular activity increases your pain, wait a few more days before resuming that activity. If you feel stiffness in your back, this is normal. It is part of the healing process

TWELVE TO SIXTEEN WEEKS POST PROCEDURE

- You may return to unrestricted work guided by your pain level. Again, **use good sense:** if a particular activity increases your pain, wait a few more days before resuming that activity.
- Avoid heavy exercise and athletics such as tennis, competitive running, weight lifting, snow or water skiing and similar activities

SIXTEEN WEEKS POST PROCEDURE

- You may resume your accustomed activities/pursuits