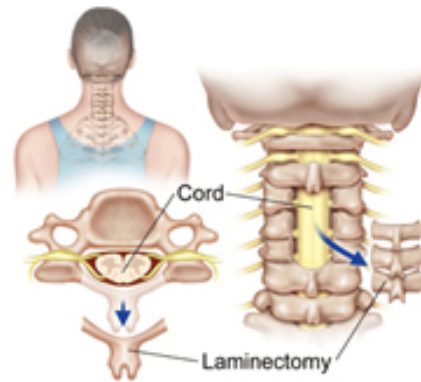


Cervical Laminectomy

This is a procedure performed from the back of the neck where one or more laminae (back arch of the vertebra) (see diagram) is removed in order to decompress the cervical cord and/or cervical nerve roots, when there is not a significant narrowing of the foramina or there is no significant complaint of arm pain.

It primarily is reserved for those who purely have cord compression, have preserved cervical spine lordosis (curve), and probably need multi-level decompression.



Post-operative care:

- Keep wound covered for 7 days, neck wounds heal well and will be almost invisible after 6 months depending on your skin type.
- After first 7 days, you can keep wound uncovered and shower normally but do not go into bath or swimming pool.
- **If you have long hair it is very important to avoid wet hair being against your wound until it is fully healed.**
- You could start swimming after 4 weeks
- Gentle massage and physiotherapy is allowed after 4 weeks
- Oral analgesia as prescribed
- See your GP few days after discharge to check your wound and discuss any concern
- During the first few weeks you could experience some mild arm symptoms on and off
- Restrictions with lifting for 6 weeks
- Avoid driving until fully comfortable with neck movements and rotation without pain, this may take up to 3-4 weeks
- Return to work also depends on your job. Usually able to return to desk job after 4 weeks. If you have manual work you may need to stay off work for 6 weeks then start on light duties for up to 8 weeks and then gradual return to normal duties.
- Avoid sitting in front of screen for more than 30 min at a time and have appropriate height chair and desk so your neck is not in constant flexed or extended position.
- May need to continue with oral pain killer for couple of weeks, as posterior approaches are slightly more painful due to need for pushing the muscles out of the way and therefore some muscle swelling occurs after surgery and specially noted between day 2-7.
- Arm pain is the first symptom to go, weakness and pins and needles can take weeks to months, and numbness is the one that can be permanent but often reduce in area

What to report after operation:

- Report any significant arm or weakness
- Significant neck pain that persists without improvement
- Discharge from wound

- Redness and swelling of the wound
- Fever
- Any other significant concern.