

Questions to ask your doctor about spinal fusions

Spinal fusion is a major and often irreversible operation. Before you agree to it, asking these questions will help you weigh the risks and understand your options.

- Have we tried everything else to treat my pain before doing a fusion?
- Are there other types of surgery for my injury that might be safer than spinal fusion? Are any of them less complicated?
- I heard some people need more surgery after having a spinal fusion. Why would that happen?
- Will this surgery make all my back pain go away, or might I still have pain afterward?
- I heard only a few people get fully better after this surgery. Why is it so hard to recover?
- Will I need to keep taking strong painkillers or have ongoing physio after the surgery?
- What movement and functions are likely to return to normal for me, and what are some examples of activities that I might have ongoing trouble with?
- Are there serious complications that might happen with spinal fusion? Is that a possibility in my case?
- Will this surgery make me less flexible or harm other parts of my spine?
- What is Adjacent Segment Disease? Could that happen to me and mean I'll need another surgery later?



Ask your case manager or GP to arrange a second opinion



You can always say no or not yet



Workers Insurance Association

The goal of this question sheet is to support patients in seeking second opinions and fully understanding their recovery options. Always consult qualified healthcare professionals regarding your specific circumstances.