PATIENT INFORMATION

Back on the Course

Golf after minimally invasive spine surgery: what to expect

Good news: most golfers get back to the game they love after spine surgery. Many even play **more** than before, because the back or leg pain that was holding them back is gone.

8 in 10

keep or improve their handicap after fusion

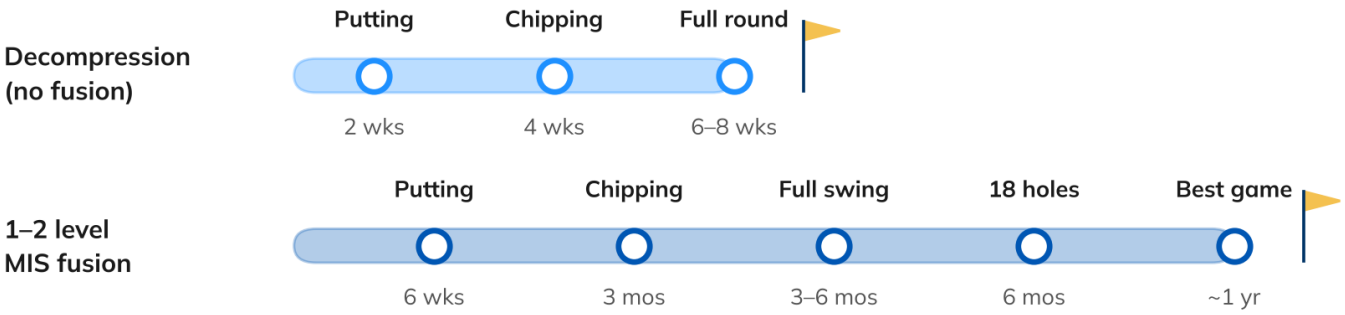
3 in 4

play as much golf or more than before

~10 yds

typical loss off the drive after fusion, if any

YOUR ROAD BACK TO THE COURSE



Typical times; your surgeon will tailor the plan to your surgery and recovery.

WILL MY HANDICAP CHANGE?

- **Decompression (no fusion):** most people return to their usual game. With the pain gone, some play better than before.
- **Fusion of one or two levels:** most golfers end up within a few strokes of their old handicap. Some lose 2 to 4 strokes and a little distance off the tee; others improve.
- **Larger surgeries** take longer to recover from and are more likely to cost a few strokes.

TIPS FOR A STRONG COMEBACK

- **Do your physical therapy.** Strong core and hip muscles protect your back and power your swing.
- **Take a lesson.** A smoother swing with a slightly shorter backswing and more turn from the hips puts less strain on your spine.
- **Ease back in:** putting, then chipping, then the range, then 9 holes, then 18.
- **Ride, don't carry.** Use a cart or push cart until your surgeon clears you to carry your bag.
- **Warm up** before every round and stop if you feel sharp or new pain.

Based on published studies of athletes after spine surgery. Every patient is different; please follow your own surgical team's instructions.

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