

Post-Op Instructions Ankle Fracture Fixation

DIET

- Begin with clear liquids and light foods (jellos, soups, etc.)
- Progress to your normal diet if you are not nauseated

WOUND CARE

- Maintain your splint, clean, dry and intact
- Do not stick anything into the top or bottom of the splint
- It is normal for the ankle and toes to swell after surgery, elevate your leg as much as possible with pillows to reduce swelling
- Skin stitches will be removed 2-3 weeks after surgery
- Patients are typically placed in a removable boot or re splinted at the first clinic visit after surgery, this depends on the specific surgery and the patient
- You may take a shower or bath after surgery, however, ***the splint or cast needs to be kept clean and dry and often a bag is placed over the splint or cast to keep it dry***
- Once you have been placed in a removable boot, you may remove this to take a shower or bath, however ***do not submerge the wound in water until the wound has healed***

MEDICATIONS

- Some patients may receive a nerve block prior to surgery, this block lasts a different length of time in each patient, but typically lasts 12-18 hours. As the block wears off you may begin to feel some tingling in the extremity, this is a good time to begin taking oral pain medication
- Local anesthetics are injected into the wound and around the incision at the time of surgery. This will wear off within 8-12 hours and it is not uncommon for patients to encounter more pain on the first or second day after surgery when swelling peaks.
- Most patients will require some narcotic pain medication for a short period of time – this can be taken as per directions on the bottle.
- Pain medication will likely not take away all of your pain and it is okay to have some discomfort
- Common side effects of the pain medication are nausea, drowsiness, and constipation. To decrease the side effects, take the medication with food. If constipation occurs, consider taking an over the counter laxative.
- If you are having problems with nausea and vomiting, contact the office to possibly have your medications changed.
- Do not drive a car or operate machinery while taking the narcotic medication
- If your provider discussed taking a blood thinner like aspirin after surgery please take it as directed.
- ***Do not take NSAIDs (Aleive, Ibuprofen, Advil, etc.) for 6-12 weeks after your surgery until cleared by Dr. Cancienne***

ACTIVITY

- You are to be ***non-weight bearing for 6 weeks after surgery, this is critical for healing of the fracture***
- Crutches, a walker, a knee scooter, or a knee scooter will need to be used initially after surgery
- Return to work depends on your job requirements, specifics of your surgery, and pain levels. This will be discussed at your follow-up appointment
- Do not engage in activities which increase pain/swelling.
- NO driving until instructed otherwise by physician
- May return to sedentary work ONLY or school when ready and able, if pain is tolerable and off narcotics

ICE THERAPY

- Icing is very important in the initial post-operative period and should begin immediately after surgery.
- Use ice packs (if machine not prescribed) for 45 minutes every 2 hours daily until your first post-operative visit. Do not get the splint wet with ice therapy

BLOOD CLOT PREVENTION

- Blood clots or deep vein thrombosis (DVT), can occur after surgery, to decrease the risk of this problem you should flex your toes up and down ten times per hour for the first 2-3 weeks after surgery



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- Elevation of the operative leg also helps decrease swelling and prevent blood clots
- You will be prescribed a medication to decrease your risk of blood clots based on your risk factors
- Be sure to let Dr. Cancienne's team know if you have a history of blood clots

EMERGENCIES**

- Contact our office M-F 8:00AM – 5:00PM at 504-897-6351
- Painful swelling or numbness (note that some swelling and numbness is normal)
- Unrelenting pain
- Fever (over 101° – it is normal to have a low-grade fever for the first day or two following surgery) or chills
- Redness around incisions
- Color change in distal arm and/or hand
- Continuous drainage or bleeding from the splint (a small amount of drainage is expected)
- Difficulty breathing
- Excessive nausea/vomiting
- If you have an emergency that requires immediate attention proceed to the nearest emergency room.

FOLLOW-UP CARE/QUESTIONS

- If you do not already have a post-operative appointment scheduled, please contact our office at 504-897-6351 to schedule.
- Typically, the first post-operative appointment following surgery is 10-14 days following surgery
- If you have any further questions please contact us during office hours