

Post-Op Instructions

Weight Bearing Status

In order to ensure a good result, foot or ankle surgery may require a period of non-weight bearing on the surgically operated limb. Depending on the type of surgery, your weight bearing status may vary in degree and length.

[] Weight Bearing as tolerated to _____

[] Partial Weight Bearing to _____ in _____

[] Non-Weight Bearing to _____ lower extremity with _____

Regardless of your weight bearing status, it would benefit you greatly to stay off your feet as much as possible for the first 48 hours. This will help reduce swelling and post operative pain. Only get up to use the restroom or eat. If wearing a surgical shoe or boot it is important to wear at all times, including at night while sleeping the first few nights to avoid hurting your foot when you are asleep.

Dressing Care

Keep your bandages completely dry and clean. If you plan on taking a shower, there are commercially available shower bags at local pharmacy that can be purchased to prevent the bandages from getting wet. Some bleeding through the bandages is normal and is no cause for alarm. If there is bleeding larger than a size of 2 silver dollars seen, then call your doctor immediately.

Pain

While post-operative pain is normal, there are ways to lessen it. When you get home, you are not going to be in much pain due to the long lasting effects of the local anesthesia. However, this will soon wear off in a few hours. Once you start to feel the slightest hint of pain, take a pain pill. The pain pills work best while pain is at a minimum, not when it is at its peak.

The next goal of pain relief is to reduce the swelling. Elevating your foot continuously will help tremendously. Your foot needs to be at a level higher than your heart. Usually 2-3 pillows will achieve this. Icing the area is the next best way to reduce swelling. Depending on the type of dressing you have there are several areas where ice can be applied. Behind the knee, inside of the ankle, and on top of the ankle are all areas where ice can be applied safely and effectively. Try to avoid putting ice directly on the bulky part of the bandages near the incision as this wet the bandage, which can lead to infection. Ice should be applied for 20minutes, then off for 40 min. for the first 2 days while your awake.

If the above doesn't lessen the pain, the next thing you should do is loosen the bandages. Sometimes the ace bandage is on too tight causing too much outward pressure causing extreme pain. Loosening up the ace bandages is usually a sure fire way to alleviate the pain. Try to leave the gauze bandages underneath intact.

Call the Office IMMEDIATELY if:

- Your bandages become saturated (soaked) with blood
- If the above measures fail to alleviate the pain
- If you develop a fever with a temperature of 100 degrees or more
- If you bump or injure your surgery site
- If you are having an adverse reaction to medication such as a rash, itching, shortness of breath, severe nausea, vomiting and diarrhea
- If you are having calf pain
- If the bandages become wet