



General Post-Op Instructions

MEDICATIONS: You will be given four medications. One is a narcotic to reduce pain (i.e. hydrocodone), one is to control inflammation (i.e. ketorolac), another is to prevent blood clots (i.e. aspirin), and the last is an anti-nausea medication (i.e. ondansetron). The pain medication should only be taken if necessary. The anti-inflammatory medication should be taken for all five days unless you experience side effects such as stomach pains or heartburn. The aspirin should be taken until you finish the prescription. The anti-nausea medication should be taken as needed for nausea.

NERVE BLOCK + PAIN MEDICATION: If you received a nerve block from your anesthesiologist, prepare in advance for the nerve block to wear off. Nerve blocks generally last 12 to 18 hours after first administered. During this time period, please take your pain medication on a regular schedule as directed by your doctor until the nerve block loses its effect. In most cases, it is recommended that you take your pain medicine on a regular schedule for the first 36 to 48 hours.

DRESSING: You may remove your dressing after 48 hours. There should be Steri-Strips (small, rectangle pieces of bandage/tape) over your incisions. Please leave them on until your postop visit. **DO NOT APPLY ANYTHING TO THE INCISION.** During your first postop visit, any sutures will be removed and new Steri-Strips will be placed over the incisions. Allow these new Steri-Strips to peel off overtime. However, if you are placed in a splint after surgery, do not remove.

SHOWERING: you may shower after 48 hours, running water over the incisions is fine. However, do NOT immerse/submerge (no pools, tubs, lakes, rivers, oceans, etc...) until cleared by your doctor to avoid risk of infection.

ICE: Ice helps decrease pain and swelling. You should use the ice frequently (several hours a day) the first 7-10 days following surgery. Make sure you do not have ice directly contacting the skin. Ice is preferred over heat during the post-operative recovery. Heat may feel better while it is applied however it will increase inflammation which causes pain.

Here is a simple, inexpensive way to make extra lightweight ice bags.

1. Wet some towels (hand or kitchen sized work well)
2. Ring the towels out slightly
3. Fold each towel into a small square (6 inches works well)
4. Place each folded wet towel into a quart size zipper type kitchen baggie
5. Pour ½ to 1 full bottle of rubbing alcohol onto each towel (alcohol freezes as a gel, not rock hard) and zip shut
6. Put into freezer

These can be refrozen many times. Remember do not place the ice directly against uncovered skin, always have a barrier between your skin and the ice such as an Ace wrap or dry towel.

WEIGHT BEARING: _____
If you are unsure of these restrictions, please call your physician to get the exact information.

ACTIVITIES: Rest and elevate your leg or shoulder for the first 24 hours. Do **NOT** place a pillow under your knee. Elevate your leg with a pillow under your calf and ankle. Keep arm in sling as directed by your doctor.

DRIVING: Your return to driving will be determined by your specific surgical procedure. Remember, you cannot drive while taking narcotic pain medications.

*** If you experience severe pain that is not relieved by the pain medication, please let us know. If you experience a temperature over 101.5°F, redness, or swelling in your thigh or calf, please contact our office immediately or if after-hours please contact the hospital or present to the nearest Emergency Room for evaluation ***

Signature: _____

Date: _____