



Lower Extremity Surgery **Postop Instructions**

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Weight-Bearing

- ☐ No weight bearing at all. Use crutches, walker, scooter, or knee walker (iWalk device) to keep weight off operated leg.
- ☐ Weight-bearing as tolerated, but be cautious with gradual return to normal activities. _____
- ☐ Use boot/hard sole shoe for ____ days. A pillowcase over the leg can protect your sheets from rough edges.
- ☐ Other: _____

Medications / Supplements (Pain meds listed in order of preference/priority)

- ☐ Take over the counter Acetaminophen (Tylenol) around the clock for 1-2 weeks for background pain control. Remember, don't go over 3000mg Acetaminophen per day from all sources. An easy way to do this is to take two 500mg pills (1,000mg total) three times a day.
- ☐ Take over the counter Ibuprofen (Advil), two pills (400mg) three times a day. It is often helpful to offset by 4 hours with Tylenol so that you get the benefits of alternating between different types of safe pain control throughout the day.
- ☐ Gabapentin (Neurontin), 1-2 tablets three times a day to help manage pain, to decrease the need for opiates, and to decrease the risk of chronic nerve pain. Call to discuss strategies if you this medication makes you excessively sleepy.
- ☐ Tramadol is the 1st line preference if the above meds are not covering the pain.
- ☐ Oxycodone is only used when none of the above are working well enough. This is usually right when a nerve block wears off, when it is wise to stay ahead of the pain.
- ☐ Take over the counter stool softeners around the clock as directed on the bottle while taking pain medications.
- ☐ Take Vitamin C 500mg once a day for 2 months to lessen risk of disproportionate pain (Complex Regional Pain Syndrome) and to help with wound/incision healing.
- ☐ Take Vitamin D3 supplements 5,000 IU once a day for 2 months to help with bone healing and for other health benefits.
- ☐ Other: _____

DVT (Blood Clot) Prevention

- ☐ During the 1st week, elevate whenever you're not up and about. However, stay active & do NOT lay down all day, every day after surgery. Your activity will be self-limited because you will get swelling, which leads to throbbing-type pain. That is your signal to lay down and get your foot elevated up above your heart.
- ☐ When sitting/laying down do exercises to simulate walking. This helps to keep the blood moving and to prevent blood clots. Do both exercises multiple times per hour when not up and walking. These exercises include:
 1. Ankle Pumps: On the non-operated side, pump your ankle (foot) up and down
 2. Quad Sets: On both sides, tense and relax your thigh muscles
- ☐ Take _____ as prescribed for ____ weeks after surgery. ☐ Baby Aspirin (81mg) twice a day for 6 weeks
- ☐ Other: _____

Dressing / Boot / Cast / Splint Care

- ☐ Boot: Adjust Velcro straps for comfort/secure fit. Inflate air bladders until comfortable(this only needs to be done once).
- ☐ Remove boot once or twice a day to move your ankle gently up and down and let it air out.
- ☐ After ____ days: Remove all dressings and ok to begin showering (no bathtubs, do not submerge). Pat dry and then re-wrap with ACE bandage to help with swelling and for protection. Call clinic if there is redness or any other concern. The shiny layer is skin glue called Dermabond and is mostly waterproof. It will begin to flake/fall off as your skin heals.
- ☐ No dressing changes at home before clinic visit. _____
- ☐ Keep the splint/boot/cast clean and dry. When showering, place a plastic bag around the cast & then tape around the leg with something very sticky (such as Duct Tape). Then, repeat the same thing with another bag and another ring of tape just above that. Water will find its way through one ring of tape, but it's very hard for it to get through two rings of tape. Another option is to use just one bag and then hang that leg out of a bath so that it is not in the bathtub at all.
- ☐ Other: _____

Follow-Up Clinic Appointment

- ☐ About 2 weeks Other Instructions: _____
- ☐ About 1 week _____
- ☐ _____

Signature: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____
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Patient Sticker Here