

Post Operative Instructions Ankle Surgery

Diet:

- ▶ Start with clear liquids and light foods (jello, soup, etc)
- ▶ You may progress to your normal diet as you tolerate.

Wound Care:

- ▶ Keep your operative dressing in place. If there is swelling of the ankle or foot you may loosen the outer bandage.
- ▶ Bleeding and swelling are normal after surgery. The fluid and blood may soak the bandage. If this occurs do not become alarmed. Please reinforce with additional dressings.
- ▶ Keep the splint and dressing dry.
- ▶ You may shower by placing waterproof bags over the dressing or by purchasing a shower bag at your local pharmacy.

Ice Therapy:

- ▶ Begin immediately after surgery.
- ▶ Placing ice over the splint/dressing can help with post-operative pain and swelling.
- ▶ Icing above the splint or dressing or behind the knee may also help. This will cool the blood that is flowing to your surgical site and will aid in controlling pain and inflammation.
- ▶ Remember to support the limb while icing.
- ▶ Ice as much as you tolerate for the **first 14 days**
- ▶ Please make sure the ice does not leak and soak the dressing.

Activity:

- ▶ Elevate the operative leg to chest level whenever possible to decrease swelling.
- ▶ **Do not place pillows under the knee** (do not keep the knee in a flexed or bent position) but rather put them under the foot or ankle to elevate the leg. This will help prevent post-operative joint stiffness.
- ▶ Use crutches or a walker to assist with walking.
- ▶ Do not engage in activities that increase knee pain, swelling, including prolonged standing or walking for the first 7-10 days after surgery.
- ▶ You may return to work or school 3-4 days after surgery, if pain is tolerable

Physical Therapy:

- ▶ **Your first therapy visit should be as soon as possible after surgery or splint removal.**
- ▶ You will be given a specific protocol for rehabilitation that will help maximize your recovery and surgical outcomes. These have been developed to provide the best outcomes possible.

Ted Stockings:

- ▶ These compressive stockings/socks are to be worn for 2 weeks after surgery.
- ▶ They aide in the control of lower extremity swelling and decrease the chances of blood clot formation.
- ▶ You may remove for hygiene, but should be worn at all other times.

Medications:

- ▶ Nerve blocks and injected anesthetics, if used **will wear off from 6-24 hours after surgery**
- ▶ Narcotic pain medications are often prescribed to aide in controlling your post operative pain. Their length of **use is encouraged to be less than 48 hours**, depending on the level of pain.
- ▶ Narcotic pain medications **will not alleviate all of your discomfort**
- ▶ **Ice and elevation** will aide in additional pain control
- ▶ Take medications as prescribed
- ▶ **Do not mix narcotics with alcohol**
- ▶ Common side effects of narcotic pain medications include
 - ▶ Nausea- Take medication with food. If prescribed you may use anti-nausea medication. If nausea persists call the office to consider having the medication changed.
 - ▶ Drowsiness
 - ▶ Constipation- if this occurs consider taking over the counter laxatives such as prune juice, Senekot, Colace, or Miralax
- ▶ **Do not drive a vehicle or operate heavy machinery while on narcotic pain medications**
- ▶ Narcotic medications **cannot** be called into the pharmacy. They will require a hand written prescription from the office. Please monitor the amount of pain medications you have remaining in order to not run out.
- ▶ Narcotics and pain medications **will not be refilled on weekends or after hours.**

Emergencies:

- ▶ Contact Dr. Newman or his staff members if **any of the following are present:**
- ▶ Painful swelling, numbness, or any abrupt change in the nature or severity of pain.
- ▶ Fever **over 101.5 degrees F** (It is normal to have a low grade fever for the first day or two after surgery)
- ▶ Redness around incisions
- ▶ Color change in extremity (*Please be aware that the skin prep in surgery may have an orange, brown, or blue tint*)
- ▶ Continuous drainage or bleeding from the incision (occasional drainage is expected)
- ▶ Difficulty breathing or excessive nausea/vomiting
- ▶ If you have an emergency after office hours or on the weekend, call (303) 344-9090 to be connected to our pager service. They will contact Dr. Newman or one of his colleagues. **Do not** call the hospital or surgery center!
- ▶ **If you have an emergency that requires immediate attention, proceed to the nearest emergency room**

Follow-up and Questions:

- ▶ During normal business hours, Dr. Newman, Andrew Gardner PA-C, or their point of contact Venita can be reached at **(303) 344-9090**
- ▶ If you do not already have a post-operative appointment scheduled, please call to schedule
- ▶ **Your first post-operative visit should be 10-14 days after surgery**
- ▶ Depending on the procedure, plan for follow-up visits at **6 weeks, 3 months, and 6 months** after surgery.

*Dr. Newman strives to take **exceptional** care of his patients. If there are any concerns, difficulties, or problems please let him know. He wants to work with you to achieve the best possible outcomes. This is best obtained with an open line of communication.*

Wising you a quick and successful recovery.