

**Postoperative Instructions after SURGICAL FIXATION OF ANKLE FRACTURE**

1. Activity instructions:
  - a. No weight bearing with your surgical lower extremity.
  - b. You must use crutches, a walker, or a rolling knee scooter to keep weight off your surgical lower extremity when moving around.
2. Surgical dressing instructions:
  - a. Do not remove the short leg splint. If you are having a problem with it, please call the office.
  - b. You may shower or bathe when desired, but the short leg splint must be kept completely dry.
3. Prevention of deep venous thrombosis (blood clot):
  - a. If you do not usually take any other blood thinning medications, then you will start taking **aspirin** 81 mg by mouth once per day on the morning of postoperative day #1 and continue this for 2 weeks.
  - b. If you already take a blood thinning medication at baseline, then your instructions are as follows: \_\_\_\_\_  
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4. Pain control:
  - a. The best way to control pain is to control swelling. The best way to control swelling is to **elevate** the surgical lower extremity above the level of your heart and apply **ice** often.
  - b. An electronic prescription has been sent to your pharmacy for a 1-week supply of **opioid pain medication**. Opioid pain medication is sedating and constipating. Increase your fluid intake and use over-the-counter stool softeners as needed to help with constipation. Use the opioid pain medication when your pain is most severe. Wean yourself off the narcotic pain medication as soon as possible.
  - c. You may take **acetaminophen** in addition to, or in substitution for your opioid pain medication, but do not exceed 3000 mg of acetaminophen in a 24-hour period from all sources.
  - d. You may take **non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs** (NSAIDs) such as ibuprofen in addition to, or in substitution for your opioid pain medication. Some patients have been advised by their family physician to avoid NSAIDs. If you are unsure, call your family physician.
  - e. It is safe to combine acetaminophen, NSAIDs, and opioid pain medication.
5. Reasons to call the office:
  - a. Foul odor or excessive drainage from your surgical dressing.
  - b. Increasing pain not relieved by pain medication.
  - c. New numbness or tingling.
  - d. Signs or symptoms of systemic illness (fever, chills, nausea, generalized weakness or body aches, etc.).
6. Follow-up:

- a. A 2-week follow-up appointment was made in the office on the day that you scheduled your surgery. If you do not know the date of the follow-up appointment, please call the office at your convenience for a reminder.