

General Outpatient Surgery: Postoperative Instructions

Please read and follow these instructions so that we can help you recover smoothly from your surgery. Failure to follow these instructions may compromise the outcome of your healing.

Medications

You should be given a prescription for pain medicine upon discharge home. Fill any prescriptions issued to you and start medications as soon as possible, as prescribed.

- Percocet: Take 1-2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed for pain
- Norco: Take 1-2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed for pain
- Aspirin 325mg: Take 1 tablet every 12 hours for 2 weeks
- Ibuprofen 200mg: Take 3 over the counter tablets every 8 hours for 48 hours
- Other: _____
- DO NOT** take NSAIDS (Ibuprofen, Motrin, Naproxen) for 6 weeks post-operatively

Activity

Minimize your activity the day of surgery. Keep your operative arm or leg elevated on pillows above the level of your heart when you are lying down for the first several days to reduce swelling.

- You have been given a cooling unit. Apply cold therapy as demonstrated for at least 4 days following surgery, use 30 minutes at a time every hour for the first 8 hours, then as needed for 30 minutes at a time. Do not let the ice pad directly touch your skin. **DO NOT** use heat.
- Apply ice, even though bandages are thick and you may not feel the cold. Apply ice to the operative extremity 3 times per day for 20 minutes for the first week until your leg or arm is feeling comfortable again. **DO NOT** use heat.
- Wear a sling at all times for _____ weeks.
- No lifting with operative extremity.
- Wear brace for _____ weeks.
- No weight bearing (i.e. walking) with operative extremity.
- Other: _____

Diet

You should resume your regular diet as tolerated

Other Instructions

Do not smoke. Smoking severely impairs the healing of skin, soft tissue and bone. Smoking (nicotine) significantly increases surgery failure and wound healing complications.

Walking

- Not applicable/walk normally
- Walk with crutches as needed, bearing weight as tolerated, for the first 24 hours. The crutches can then be discontinued as tolerated.
- Use crutches or walker. **DO NOT** bear weight on the operative extremity until instructed at the next office visit.
- Other: _____

Dressing

Keep the dressing clean and dry.

You can expect some light wound seepage or drainage through the bandage. **DO NOT BE ALARMED.** Fluid seepage is normal. If the dressing does get soaked, remove and replace with dry gauze and an ace wrap. **NEVER** remove paper tapes (steri-strips) or your sutures.

If the ace wrap is uncomfortable, you may remove it and rewrap it.

- Brace applied. You will be given specific instructions regarding the brace.
- Remove the dressing 72 hours after surgery. **NEVER** remove paper tapes (steri-strips) or your sutures. You should apply a Band-Aid over each incision after removing the dressing.
- DO NOT** remove dressing until first office visit.
- Other: _____

Showering

- You may shower 2 days after surgery unless told otherwise. It's okay to let soapy water wash over the incision but **DO NOT** soak it and **DO NOT** rub the incision. After showering, reapply new band-aids or gauze pads, and an ace wrap or brace if applicable.
- You may **NOT** get the dressings wet until after your doctor visit. Cover appropriately when washing to keep them from getting wet.

Physical Therapy

- You will be given a physical therapy prescription. Please call to begin physical therapy in the next _____ weeks.
- You will be given a physical therapy prescription when you are seen in the office for your first post-operative visit. You will start physical therapy 4 weeks after surgery.
- Formal physical therapy is not needed at this time.

Follow-Up

A follow-up appointment will be made for you before you leave the surgery center. Please make sure you knew the date and time of this appointment before you leave the surgery center.

The usual post-operative period for wound/check/staple removal/suture removal is between 10-14 days depending on the site of the procedure.

Notify Us

Call if you are experiencing warning signs such as:

- Severe pain that is not reduced with elevation, ice and medication
- Fever above 101.5 degrees F
- Severe calf pain, shortness of breath, or chest pain
- Adverse reactions to the prescribed medications
- Severe pain uncontrolled by your pain medications
- Excessive bloody wound drainage

The Spine and Orthopedic Center is open Monday through Friday, 8:30AM-5:00PM.

- Main Office Number: (805) 563-3307
- Office Call Service: (805) 882-2000

If it is after-hours, you may call and/or proceed to the local Emergency Department.

I ACKNOWLEDGE AND AGREE TO THE ABOVE:

PATIENT/PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

If signed by someone other than patient, please state relationship: _____

RESPONSIBLE ADULT SIGNATURE: _____

Relationship to patient: _____