

# General Discharge Instructions

Use these instructions until your first follow-up appointment.  
You will be given further instructions at your follow-up appointment.



## General

Rest for 3-5 days with your operative limb elevated on pillows above the level of your heart and apply ice for 30 minutes of each hour to help control swelling. Move and wiggle the furthest extremities of the operative limb every hour to increase circulation and to help prevent blood clots. You will find that you are sitting in one place longer than usual, so it is important to wiggle your toes and do ankle circles as well to maintain circulation in your legs. After anesthesia, do not drive, operate machinery, consume alcohol or tranquilizers, sign legal documents, use a credit card, or be responsible for the care of a minor for **24 hours**, or for as long as you are taking narcotic pain medication. Begin with clear liquids and light foods to eat. Progress your diet as tolerated. Avoid heavy, greasy, or spicy food the day of your surgery.

*Following the surgeon's orders (checked below) is the most important thing you can do to facilitate the healing process.*

## Activity

- Do not use your operative limb until further instruction.       Use your operative limb as tolerated.

## Dressing Care

- DO NOT remove your dressing until your follow up appointment. Keep dressing clean and dry.
- You may shower after 24 hours. Keep the entire dressing covered with plastic to keep it clean and dry.
- You may remove gauze dressing after 72 hours, leave the Steri-Strip in place. Place Band-Aids over Steri-Strip and re-wrap ACE bandage.

## Discharge Medications

You have been prescribed a narcotic for pain relief. Take your next dose after:

- If you **have not** been prescribed an anti-inflammatory, you may take an over-the-counter anti-inflammatory such as Advil (Ibuprofen) or Aleve (Naproxen) as instructed on the packaging. Take your next dose after:
- If you **have not** been prescribed a pain medication containing acetaminophen (Tylenol), you may take Tylenol as instructed on the packaging. Take your next dose after:
- You have been given additional information on a separate sheet if necessary for:
- Scopolamine Patch       Nerve Block       Frequent Medications
- Other:

## Follow-up Appointment

Your next follow-up appointment is:

## Signatures

Doctor Signature:  Date:

Nurse Signature:  Date:

**I have received written and oral discharge instructions regarding the care of this patient. I have had the opportunity to have all my questions answered. I certify that I am transporting this patient home and will be responsible for this patient for 24 hours following surgery.**

Caregiver Signature:  Date:

## Helpful Information About Your Pain Medication

1. Pain medication should be taken only on an "as-needed" basis. It is best to take the pain medication at the earliest sign of increasing pain rather than waiting until the pain is severe.
2. It is important to eat some food every time you take your pain medication (even in the middle of the night) otherwise you are more likely to become nauseated. Usually a few crackers, some pudding, applesauce, or a banana will suffice.
3. Narcotics can cause constipation, so increase the amount of fluid and fiber in your diet. Examples of over-the-counter medications to prevent constipation are Metamucil, Citrucel, Miralax, or a stool softener.
4. DO NOT take medications containing Tylenol (acetaminophen) if it is already included in your prescription pain medication. Additional amounts of Tylenol can cause liver damage.
5. Continue to take your usual medications; the pain medication will not interfere with them in any way. DO NOT use alcohol or other sedatives while taking narcotic pain medication. Smoking while using narcotic pain medication increases the risk of over-sedation.
6. Try to anticipate your pain needs. If you are running out of your medication, please contact your pharmacy for refills. If you need further assistance, please contact the office between 8am-5pm Monday through Thursday. Please take actions before you are completely out of medication.

You can always reach us by phoning 425-820-1221.

After business hours, an answering service will page the on-call doctor for you.

## Call Our Office If You Experience The Following Symptoms

1. Itching accompanied by hives, welts, rash or trouble breathing. This maybe an allergic reaction.
2. Excessive or unbearable pain NOT relieved by your prescribed pain medication.
3. If you cannot empty your bladder within 6 hours of discharge.
4. Excessive or bright red drainage on your bandage.
5. Unusual swelling, tenderness and warmth to the touch in your calf that develops suddenly.
6. Extremities on the operative body part that become blanched white or bluish in color or feel very cold to the touch.
7. Flu like symptoms (nausea, general body aches, or a temperature over 101 degrees for longer than 48 hours) which may be signs of infection.

**Call 911 for trouble breathing, chest pain, loss of consciousness or any other emergency.**