



**DARIN W ALLRED M.D.**  
ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY AND SPORTS MEDICINE

## **Foot/Ankle Surgery Post Operative Instructions**

### **Food**

Start slow. It is natural to want to eat a lot after surgery. We recommend you eat small amounts of your normal diet and increase your intake as your nausea improves.

### **Dressing**

If you have a cast or splint: keep your dressing on until you return for follow up. If you do not have a cast or splint: you may remove your dressing and shower (no bathing or soaking your incision) after 48 hrs. Redress your incision with a clean dressing or large Bandaid.

### **Incision**

Keep your incision dry for 48 hrs. After 48 hrs you may remove the dressing and shower. Leave the Steri-Strips in place. You may let water run over the incision but do not soak your incision in a bath, swimming pool, lake or hot tub for three weeks. Keep a Band-Aid on the incision until the incision is no longer draining (about 7 days)

### **Weight bearing**

Check with the nursing staff to see if you are allowed to put weight on your operative extremity. MOST patients are not allowed to put weight on their foot for 2-6 weeks.

### **Activity**

I want you to be as active (without putting weight on your foot) as your pain and swelling allows. This helps prevent blood clots.

### **Blood clots**

My biggest concern after foot and ankle surgery is the formation of blood clots. To prevent blood clots, I recommend you be active and take One tablet (325 mg) of aspirin twice daily with food for 2 weeks. If you or your family have had a blood clot or other reason to have an increased risk for a blood clot, you may need more aggressive treatment. Please discuss this with Dr. Allred within 24 hrs after surgery. What does a blood clot feel like? Usually (not always) blood clots surface a few weeks after surgery. They usually (not always) cause calf pain and increased ankle swelling that is new. Rarely, they cause shortness of breath. If you think you may have a blood clot call the office immediately (during office hours) or go to the ER (if after hours)

### **Swelling**

The best way to control swelling is by keeping your foot above your heart (sitting up in bed usually does NOT get your foot above your heart). Swelling control dramatically affects healing and complications!

If you do not have a splint or cast: Ice machines or reusable ice pads can be purchased on Amazon. Just search ankle ice machine. They can be great for decreasing pain and swelling. I like them but frozen peas work as well. Be careful to not freeze your skin. I recommend 20 min on and 10 min off unless the machine has a way to prevent freezing (ie temperature settings) If you have a splint or cast, the ice machines do not work very well.

### **Physical therapy**

If needed/wanted, we will arrange during your first post op visit.

### **Medications**

As discussed above, I recommend Aspirin for two weeks. Rotate over the counter ibuprofen and Tylenol. For example take regular Tylenol followed by Ibuprofen 2 hrs later. Do not take more than the recommended daily dose for each. I also recommend over the counter Pepcid or other antacid while on ibuprofen to prevent a stomach ulcer. Narcotics: see below.

### **Narcotics**

You may need them for a few days but the quicker you stop using them the better you will feel. It is very rare to need a refill. We **DO NOT** refill medications after hours or on weekends so plan ahead. It takes about 72 hrs to get a refill. If you take narcotic medications regularly you will need to make arrangements with your prescribing provider.

### **Post Operative Visits**

Call for an appointment approximately 2 weeks after surgery.

### **Precautionary Measures**1) To prevent infection, you have been administered IV antibiotics prior to your surgery.

2) To prevent blood clots, you will need to be active. I want you to walk around your living room once every hour while you are awake. Also take Aspirin 325 mg twice daily for 2 weeks to prevent a blood clot.

3) If you are taking narcotic pain medication (Percocet or Vicodin), you may need a stool softener to prevent constipation. Over-the-counter medication such as Docusate or Milk of Magnesia is recommended.

### **Emergencies**

Call the office at if you experience the following:

Incision opens

Increased redness at incision site

Pain uncontrolled by pain medicine

Uncontrollable bleeding

Fever > 101 ° F or shaking chills

Difficulty breathing or chest pain

Severe pain or redness in calf

Painful swelling

### **Contact**

Please refer to the website for the office phone number.