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ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY AND SPORTS MEDICINE

Total Hip Arthroplasty Post Operative Instructions: Posterior Approach

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.

Incision

In general, we recommend you keep your dressing on until Post Op Day 10. If it is soaked in the hospital, we will change it. If it is fine in the hospital but starts to drain then please remove the dressing and apply a new dressing. If it drains more than a few days: please call the office. Try to keep your dressing dry unless you have a water resistant dressing (the hospital nurses will tell you if it is water resistant). Do not soak your hip until the incision has healed completely (usually 3 weeks)

Weight bearing

You should be full weight bearing.

Activity

I want you to be as active as your pain and swelling allows. This helps prevent blood clots.

You may bear weight as tolerated on the operative leg. Listen to your body and only weight bear as much as your pain allows. You will need a walker or crutches for two to three weeks and possibly a cane for a few more weeks. Plan on taking it relatively easy for 6 weeks as the bone grows into your implant.

You technically do not have any movement restrictions. Having said that: I still do not recommend you avoid dangerous positions that put you at risk for dislocation. Your therapist will teach you a less strict version of "posterior hip precautions"

Driving

Do not drive while on narcotics or until your leg strength and reaction time will make you a safe driver. If it is your right leg, this usually takes 6 weeks or more.

Blood clots

My biggest concern after THA is the formation of blood clots. To prevent blood clots, I recommend you be active and take One tablet (81mg) of aspirin twice daily with food for 4 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)

Bruising

Massive bruising is normal

Physical therapy

I want you to meet with the therapist before you leave the hospital. I do recommend PT post op but you will find you will not need much PT.

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 several days but the earlier 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 2 weeks after surgery.

Dental Procedures

You should not have any non-emergent dental procedures for 3 months after surgery. After the 3 month mark, we do not recommend antibiotics for dental procedures unless you are high risk for infection ie immunocompromised.

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 81 mg twice daily for 4 weeks to prevent a blood clot. (If you are on another blood thinner you will NOT take the aspirin.
- 3) We recommend that you take Colace 100mg twice daily, which is a stool softener, to prevent constipation. Miralax can be used with the Colace if you are still having constipation, which can be taken twice daily as needed.
- 4) You must follow posterior hip precautions for 6 weeks. See "activity" above.

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 > 101.5 degrees 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.