



West Bay Orthopaedic Associates, Inc.

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Reconstruction Post-Operative Instructions

ANESTHESIA: If you had general anesthesia, you may experience nausea, fatigue, or mild confusion for the next 24-48 hours. Someone else should be responsible for driving you home and assisting you during the initial recovery period. If you received nerve block or local anesthesia during your surgery, you may be unable to move your foot, ankle, and/or lower leg because of weakness, and you may have numbness. This can last up to 12-18 hours. Protect your foot/ankle/knee and wear the boot, shoe, splint, or simple dressing provided to you.

MEDICATION: You have been given a prescription for narcotic pain medication which should relieve a large portion of your discomfort but, will not relieve all of it. After any operation, a certain degree of pain is to be expected. **To avoid being too uncomfortable when this happens,** you should begin taking the pain medication as prescribed *as soon as you receive it, as instructed.* Do not drink alcohol, drive a car, or operate hazardous machinery when taking the pain medication. To minimize constipation, you may augment any laxative prescription you receive with over the counter treatments or food/drink that counteract this (e.g., prune juice) if necessary. If you experience reactions such as rash, upset stomach, trouble breathing, or confusion, stop your medication and call the office or your medical doctor immediately for assistance.

ACTIVITY: Unless otherwise instructed after surgery, you should remain non-weight bearing on the operated extremity, using crutches and keeping the extremity elevated at or just above your heart as much as possible to minimize wound problems, infection, swelling, and pain. Staying off your operated extremity and keeping it elevated above your heart for the first two weeks after surgery is the most important responsibility of the patient in minimizing their complications during the early post operative setting. These instructions should be followed until you see Dr. Mechrefe in his office at your first follow-up appointment. Avoid strenuous activities which will increase the pain and swelling you experience, such as stair climbing or prolonged walking/standing. If you can see hardware such as wires or pins, protect them and be careful not to get them caught on anything to avoid dislodgement or advancement. Also begin tightening thigh muscles and doing straight leg raises as tolerated. Whatever form of immobilization/protection has been put on your leg should be worn at all times.

WOUND CARE: The dressing (entire bandage and covering) that you have on your extremity should remain on and intact until your first post-operative visit. You should avoid getting it wet or dirty, which can increase your chances of infection. Showers are permitted before bandage removal provided you adequately cover and protect the leg from any dampness. This can be done by carefully covering the extremity with an impermeable plastic bag and heavy tape. Avoid immersing the foot/ankle in water, such as when taking a bath. Occasionally, some staining will occur on the outer aspect of the dressing. This is generally of no concern. In the rare case you notice it continuing to expand over time, then we should be contacted. If you feel your bandage or immobilization has become too tight, the most common cause is over-activity or lack of elevation because we typically pad the foot/ankle quite well and give it lots of room with dressing material. A short period of elevation, ice, and rest usually relieves this sensation, but if it continues to be a problem you should call our office. Do not remove your bandage unless we instruct you to do so.

DIET: Begin with liquids and light foods (jello, soup), and then progress to a normal diet as tolerated.

PROBLEMS: Call the office at 738-3730 during the day if you experience any of the following: fever or chills, increasing swelling or numbness, pain uncontrollable by appropriate medication use, expanding drainage or a soaked dressing, or any worrisome condition. If an emergency arises and you are not able to contact me or the office, or if it is after business hours, please call 737-7000 and ask the Kent County Hospital operator to contact the on-call physician for West Bay Orthopedics.

FOLLOW-UP: An appointment for follow-up should have already been made with you to be seen roughly 2 weeks after surgery in the office. Please call the office as soon as possible to confirm. At the time of follow-up, the findings at surgery will be reviewed with you, and you will probably be asked to undergo physical therapy. All of our physical therapists have received special training in the care of the foot, ankle, and lower extremity. We look forward to you having a great surgical experience and a rapid recovery!