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## **SURGERY POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

The following are guidelines to refer to regarding your postoperative period of time. These are meant to be strictly guidelines. If you have any questions that are not adequately covered by this form, please do not hesitate to call the office and we will address these right away at (941) 556-6900.

### **1. WEIGHT BEARING STATUS FOR LOWER EXTREMITY SURGERIES**

Depending on the type of surgery that you have had, you may be allowed to be full weight bearing immediately postoperatively. Even if this is the case, you will still need to use crutches to protect your knee, and as you feel better gradually apply more weight to the knee and less weight to the crutches to the point of being completely weaned from the crutches. If your surgery requires you to be non weight bearing, we will instruct you at subsequent office follow-up visits when to begin to apply weight. The nurses upon discharge should instruct you as to whether or not you can be weight bearing as tolerated with the protection of crutches, or full weight bearing.

### **2. DO NOT GET YOUR WOUNDS WET**

### **3. DRESSING CARE**

Unless otherwise instructed by the nurse upon discharge, you may change your dressing as needed. It is usually adequate to unwrap the bandage and/or Ace wrap and change the underlying gauze, replace with new fresh gauze and a new Ace bandage. If the dressing continues to become saturated with drainage, please call the office at (941) 556-6900.

### **4. ICE**

It is important to ice your surgical site for 20-30 minutes every 2-3 hours. This will decrease the amount of swelling as well as decrease the amount of the pain that you are experiencing. It is not necessary to wake up throughout the night time hours to do this, but during waking hours do this as described above, at least during the first 48-72 hours.

### **5. PAIN MEDICATION**

You should have been given a prescription for pain medication. Take this as directed on the bottle. This should be done on an as needed basis. If you are having no pain, there is no need to take any medication. More than likely, we had injected your surgical site with a long acting Novocaine. This can give you some pain relief for 6 to 24 hours. The average is more in the 8-12 hour range. This will not necessarily make you pain-free, but certainly can decrease the amount of pain that you are having. It is not unusual that in the middle of the night, when this medicine begins to wear off, you will have an increase in your pain. Don't be alarmed, this is most likely the result of the Novocaine wearing off. Be sure to continue icing and taking your pain medication; however, if your pain seems to be out of proportion and is of concern, please do not hesitate to call the office at (941) 556-6900.

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### **6. ACTIVITIES**

In the immediate postoperative period of time, it is important to rest and regain your strength. When seen on your first postoperative visit in the office, we will be able to guide you as to increasing your activity level. For the first few days after surgery, try to keep your surgical site elevated as often and as much as possible for lower extremity surgeries.

### **7. DIET**

Gradually resume your normal dietary habits, but be sure to do this in a gradual manner. Start with clear liquids and light foods, such as crackers. As you tolerate this, begin to increase your diet.

### **8. PHYSICAL THERAPY**

Unless instructed by myself, one of my Physician's Assistants, or the discharge nurse, we will wait to begin physical therapy until after your first post operative visit.

I realize that not all of your questions may have been addressed by the above information. Please keep in mind that we are only a phone call away. Do not hesitate to call the office with concerns or issues that you have. It has been a pleasure to provide medical care for you, and we look forward to helping you on your road to recovery.

David A. Sugar, M.D.