



## **Post-Operative Instructions**

### **Tibial Intramedullary Nail**

**Please read all instructions carefully and ask for clarification if necessary**

#### **ACTIVITY**

You may walk with **PARTIAL WEIGHT-BEARING (50% WEIGHT)** on the operative leg with assistance of crutches

- You can bend your knee as much as the dressings will allow
- The optimal position of your leg after surgery is with you lying flat with your ankle higher than your knee and heart to help **reduce swelling**

You **MAY NOT** drive until you are cleared to do so at one of your post-operative visits

You may continue your normal diet as tolerated

#### **DRESSING/WOUND CARE/SHOWERING**

It is expected that your knee will be very swollen and bruising can occur

- This swelling may occur from the thigh to the foot for the first week or so
- Loosen the ace wrap around your knee if it becomes too tight or painful

Please remove your Ace wrap on the **SECOND DAY after your surgery**

- **You do have** sutures; they will be removed at your first post op visit
- Please leave the underlying bandage on unless it is fully saturated or you may cover suture sites with a waterproof bandaid
- You may experience drainage for first 2-3 days from your incision, **this is normal**
  - o If you experience drainage, you may cover your incision with a dry gauze dressing

You may shower after you remove the Ace wrap on the **SECOND DAY after your surgery**

- **Do not** let the water directly hit your knee
- Pat knee dry after showering
- **NO LOTIONS, OINTMENTS OR CREAMS** should be used over incisions

**\*\*DO NOT SUBMERGE YOUR INCISIONS IN A BATH, POOL, ETC\*\***

## COLD THERAPY

You should ice the knee every hour for 20 minutes at a time for the first 2 days, then on an as-needed basis after the first 48 hours

- **Avoid direct skin contact with the ice and exposure longer than 20 minutes as this can lead to frostbite**

## MEDICATIONS

You may begin taking your prescription pain medication (below) upon arriving home and should continue taking it every 4-6 hours as needed for pain

- **Percocet 5/325** (Oxycodone 5mg with Acetaminophen 325mg): Take 1 tablet every 4-6 hours as needed for pain
- You may take 2 tablets if pain is severe
- **\*\*\*DO NOT take additional Tylenol with the Percocet\*\*\***

You will also have a prescription for:

- **Aspirin**: Take one in the morning and one in evening to prevent blood clots
- **Zofran** (Ondansetron): For nausea as needed
- You may take Advil (2 pills three times per day) or Aleve (2 pills twice a day) to help minimize inflammation, soreness and swelling

DO NOT DRIVE a vehicle or operate any machinery while taking narcotic pain medication

DO NOT drink alcohol while taking narcotic pain medication

Try to **take the above medications with food** to help prevent any stomach irritation

You may also take an **over-the-counter stool softener** (such as Senna, Dulcolax or Colace) to help prevent constipation from the narcotic pain medication

If you have **any adverse or allergic reactions** to medications, stop them and call the office

**\*\*Please note, if you had a nerve block this will likely wear off within 24-48 hours of surgery. It is advised to begin taking your pain medicine before the block fully wears off\*\*\***

## FOLLOW-UP

You should have your first post-op visit scheduled for **one week** after surgery

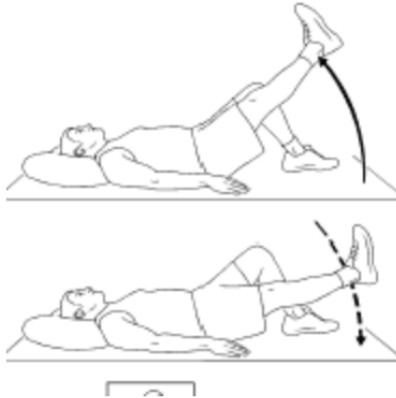
- If you do not have an appointment, please call our office (**860-533-4692**) to schedule

**Please call the office (860-533-4692) if you experience any of the following:**

- Fever over 101° (low-grade fevers are common after surgery)
- Non-stop drainage or bleeding from incisions that soaks through multiple dressings
- Excessive pain that is not being controlled with medication
- Chest pain or difficulty breathing
- Excessive redness or discharge from incisions

## EXERCISES

### STRAIGHT LEG RAISE



Lay on your back with arms at your side and opposite leg bent to 90 degrees with foot flat on the floor. Keep operative leg straight and raise towards ceiling until parallel to opposite thigh. Hold for 3 seconds then slowly lower to the floor. Perform 7-10 repetitions, three times a day

### SHORT ARC QUAD EXERCISE



Lay on your back with towel (or 2-liter bottle) under operative knee. Gradually extend the operative knee until straight, tightening your quad muscle. Perform 7-10 reps, three times a day

### ANKLE FLEXION/EXTENSION



Actively flex and extend ankle as far as you can, performing 10-15 repetitions per hour