
Post-suture Removal Instructions for Total Joint Replacement

- You will need to do your exercises given to you in the hospital as directed 10 times each, twice daily. If given a prescription for physical therapy you will need to call to set up your outpatient physical therapy appointment at a location of your choice. If you are getting home health physical therapy you will start the outpatient therapy after you are discharged from home health.
- It is okay to shower if you feel safe to get in and out of the shower. The steri-strips on your incision will fall off on their own in a few days. If they do not fall off in seven days, it is fine to remove them. You will only need dressing on the incision if you are still having drainage.
- Wear your TED hose on the surgery leg for one to two more weeks during the day for swelling. You may remove them at night for comfort. You do not need to wear them on the non-operative leg.
- You may switch from your walker to a cane when you feel safe to do so. Use the cane in the opposite hand of your surgery leg.
- Continue your pain medication as needed. Also, you will need to continue the medication to thin your blood to prevent blood clots. This will be the Aspirin 325mg twice daily for four more weeks or the prescription blood thinner you were given until it is gone.
- When you need a refill on your medications please give us at least four business days before you will run out of your prescription. Refills should be requested between the hours of 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Thursday. By law, pain medication cannot be called in. You will need to pick this up at our office or it will need to be mailed to you. Please leave a message with the name of the medication, the strength of the medication and your date of birth.
- If your operative leg is the right leg then you may drive three to four weeks after your surgery, only if you feel safe and strong enough to do so, and you are not taking your pain medication. If your operative leg is the left side then you may drive when you are no longer taking narcotic pain medication.
- Please keep in mind you will need to take an antibiotic before any colonoscopies or dental procedures for the rest of your life. You may contact us and we will call this in for you.
- You should expect continued pain, swelling and bruising. Your ankle may continue to swell during the day for four to six more weeks. Call the office if you have a temperature greater than 101 degrees, increased drainage from your incision, increased swelling that is not relieved with elevation and ice or increased redness. Warmth around the incision is normal and may be present for up to a year after surgery.