

## Postoperative Instructions: Ankle Fracture Fixation

### ● GENERAL

- Your surgery was performed through an incision at the outside and possibly inside of your ankle. It is normal to experience some sharp pain in the ankle area from surgery. The key is elevation in the first 48 hours anytime you feel that the pain is increasing.

### ● DIET

- Begin with clear liquids and light foods (jellos, soups, etc.)
- Progress to your normal diet if you are not nauseated
- Take Zofran prescribed to you if you develop nausea

### ● WOUND CARE

- The splint you are placed in after surgery should remain in place until you come to the office for suture removal
- If you note increasing redness around the splint (spreading) please call the office
- The splint needs to remain entirely dry until we see you back in the office

### ● MEDICATIONS

- The incisions are injected with a medication that makes the area numb; however, this will wear off in 8-12 hours. We recommend that you start pain medications when you get home so that they are on board before this wears off.
- Most patients will require some narcotic pain medication for a short period of time – this can be taken as per directions on the bottle and is given for a maximum of 6 weeks.
- Common side effects of the pain medication are nausea, drowsiness, and constipation – to decrease the side effects, take medication with food – if constipation occurs, consider taking an over-the-counter laxative
- If you are having problems with nausea and vomiting, try the Zofran prescribed and contact the office to possibly have your medication changed (312-432-2440)
- Do not drive a car or operate machinery while taking the narcotic medication
- Ibuprofen 200-400mg (i.e. Advil) may be taken in between the narcotic pain medication to provide baseline relief, reducing the overall amount of pain medication required, and increase the time intervals between narcotic pain medication usage

- We recommend all patients take 325mg of Aspirin daily starting the day after surgery for 3 weeks to help prevent blood clots.

#### ● ACTIVITY

- Elevate the operative leg ABOVE chest level whenever possible to decrease swelling. This involves lying completely flat with the leg elevated. The first 48 hours is a balance between mobilization (which is encourage) and elevation (to be done whenever possible).
- **DO NOT PLACE A PILLOW UNDER THE BACK OF YOUR KNEE** (i.e. do not maintain knee in a flexed or bent position). Pillows should be under the ankle (not heel) which will keep the ankle above your heart.
- You must remain **NON WEIGHT BEARING** likely for 6 weeks or follow further instructions given from the office.
- Avoid long periods of sitting (without leg elevated) or long distance traveling for 2 weeks
- NO driving until instructed otherwise by physician and no driving while taking narcotics
- May return to sedentary work ONLY or school 3-4 days after surgery, if pain is tolerable

#### ● EMERGENCIES\*\*

- Contact Dr. Yanke at 312-432-2440 if any of the following are present:
  - Painful swelling or numbness
  - Unrelenting pain
  - Fever greater than 101.5° at least 48 hours after surgery surgery) or chills
  - Redness that is spreading around incisions
  - Continuous drainage or bleeding from incision (a small amount of drainage is expected)
  - Excessive nausea/vomiting
  - Difficulty breathing/chest pain - Consider going directly to the emergency room if this is persistent
- \*\*If you have an emergency after office hours or on the weekend, contact the same office number (312-432-2440) and you will be connected to our page service – they will contact Dr. Yanke
- **\*Do NOT call the hospital or surgicenter.**
- \*\*If you have an emergency that requires immediate attention, proceed to the nearest emergency room.

● **FOLLOW-UP CARE/QUESTIONS**

- You will receive a call within 48 hours of surgery to check on your status. Typically this will be the night of surgery
- If you have additional questions that arise at any time, feel free to email [Adam.Yanke@rushortho.com](mailto:Adam.Yanke@rushortho.com)
- If you do not already have a postoperative appointment scheduled, please contact the office during normal office hours (312-432-2440) and ask for appointment scheduling for 10-14 days after surgery.