

## **Post-op PATIENT Instructions: ANKLE FRACTURE ORIF**

**Dressing:** A dressing/splint has been applied to your ankle for support, to control swelling and to absorb any fluid/blood. The splint/dressing will remain (**not to be changed**) until your 1<sup>st</sup> post-op follow-up appointment. Soreness and bruising is expected for several days afterward.

**Bathing:** Showering is permitted following surgery but the splint/dressing is **NOT** waterproof and needs to be **covered** and kept **dry!!!**

**Ice:** Ice is a powerful anti-inflammatory. Icepacks/wraps will help to reduce swelling and pain. Use liberally (20-30 min./session), but remember to protect the skin from direct contact (and frostbite).

**Activity:** The ankle and toes should be elevated higher than the level of your heart. Toe motion (wiggling and straightening) to reduce swelling is highly recommended. **No driving until cleared by your surgeon.**

**Pain:** A local numbing medicine has been injected into the surgical site. This may provide temporary pain relief and typically wears off 4-6 hours after surgery. Also, a narcotic for pain medication is provided. Fill this and begin taking the medicine when your pain starts. Nausea, drowsiness, and constipation are common side effects of narcotics. Adequate fluid intake and a stool softener obtained over the counter from your local pharmacy is recommended to minimize constipation. Call the office if you are unable to tolerate your medication.

**Precautions:** Call the office **(813) 684-2663** if you develop: temperatures >101°F, shortness of breath, chest pain, uncontrolled pain, marked redness/hives, persistent drainage, new onset numbness, significant incisional/calf swelling, or any other concerns.

### **Post-operative Visit/Appointment:**

- **Call (813) 684-2663 today to make a post-operative appointment to see your surgeon 2 weeks following your surgery.**

### **Additional Instructions:**

**☒ Weightbearing: No weight on the operative leg!**

**MEDICATIONS:** For **MILD** pain; Take **OVER THE COUNTER** medications:

- ☐ Tylenol (acetaminophen; 650mg tabs): Take 1 tab by mouth every 6hrs. as needed for pain
- ☐ Aleve (naproxen; 220mg tabs): Take 2 tabs by mouth every 12hrs WITH FOOD as needed for pain

**\*Stop if stomach upset/abnormal bleeding occurs; DO NOT TAKE with ANY blood thinners (or aspirin)\***

For **MODERATE to SEVERE PAIN**; Take the **PRESCRIPTION** medication:

- ☐ Oxycodone (5mg tablets): Take 1-2 tabs by mouth each 4-6hours as needed for pain

## **SPLINT INFORMATION SHEET**

### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

A splint has been applied to allow your injured ankle to heal. Splints never feel completely comfortable. However, by controlling your swelling, pain, and stiffness with ice, elevation and medications your comfort can be maximized.

**Swelling:** Is controlled by use of ice and elevation. Elevate the ankle **above the level of your heart** with toes pointed toward the ceiling is recommended. Propping the ankle on pillows can help.

**Ice:** Ice is a powerful anti-inflammatory that helps to control swelling and pain. Surrounding the splint with ice contained in a waterproof container wrapped in a towel is effective.

**Stiffness:** Early and frequent movement of the toes helps to prevent swelling and discomfort.

### **SPLINT CARE:**

- **Keep the splint dry!!**
  - Covering with a waterproof bag while showering or in damp areas is recommended.
  - Your splint is **NOT** waterproof!!
  - (Cast protectors can also be purchased online or at the office for showering convenience.)
  - Getting the splint wet can result in severe skin damage.
  - If the splint is damp, dry your skin with a hair drier (cool setting) for 30 minutes.
  - Call the office immediately if your splint is soaked through or skin maceration occurs.
- **NEVER insert ANYTHING under the splint!!**
  - This may result in scratching of the skin and infection!
  - Over-the-counter Benadryl can decrease itching.
  - Chafing/irritation can be reduced by smoothing with a nail file and taping rough edges.
- **Do NOT put weight on the splint unless specifically permitted to do so.**

### **CALL THE OFFICE WITH:**

- Unanswered questions/concerns about the splint.
- Severe, unexpected, or persistent pain
- Numbness/tingling of fingers since the splint was placed (after the nerve block wears off)
- Persistent feeling of irritation under the splint
- Foul smelling odor from the splint
- Pus or blood from under the splint
- Fevers >101.5 F lasting longer than 24 hours
- Splint breakage.