
Post-Operative Instructions: Femoral or Tibial Intramedullary Nail

Medications

- **Pain Medications:** Your pain medication regimen is individualized and based on your allergies, medical history, and current medications. Please try to minimize your use of narcotics/opioids. Your goal should be to gradually decrease the use of pain medication over the next 2-4 weeks. **Only take these medications for severe pain!**
- **Anticoagulation Therapy:** Aids in the prevention of you acquiring a blood clot. If you experience excessive calf pain & swelling, that does not go away with elevation and rest; call our office. **Anticoagulation therapy is individualized and will consist of one of the below medications. If you were on a blood thinner before your surgery that medication will likely be re-started after your surgery.**
 - **Aspirin 81mg TWICE daily for 4 weeks**
 - Eliquis 2.5mg TWICE daily
 - Xarelto 10mg daily
 - Lovenox
 - Coumadin

Wound Care

- **Incision Site:** Your incision may be warm to touch, itchy and slightly red for several weeks after surgery.
 - **Staples or Suture:** If staples are used to close your incision, we will remove these at your first post-operative visit in 2 weeks.
 - **Bathing with Staples:** While staples are present, you may shower keeping the site covered with a plastic covering until staples are removed. Once staples are removed, you can shower normally; allowing water to trickle down over your steri-strips, then pat dry. Refrain from submerging in water until the incision is fully healed.

Activity

- **Weight Bearing**
 - Unless otherwise directed you may put as much weight as you feel comfortable on your operative leg. If there are any weight bearing restrictions they will be

noted below. You may need to use a walker or crutches but you may decrease your use of these devices as you feel more comfortable with walking.

- **Driving:** You may drive once you are no longer taking narcotic medication during the day, have transitioned to a cane, and feel safe & comfortable operating your vehicle which is usually around 4 weeks after surgery. While you are traveling as a passenger for the first 5 weeks following surgery, it is advised that you get out of the car at least hourly and take a short walk.
- **Traveling/Flying:** Please do not travel/fly for 4-6 weeks after surgery.

Follow-Up: Follow up in 2 weeks with Dr. Shield. If you do not already have an appointment, please call 813-684-2663 to schedule your post-operative appointment.

Medication Refills: We need 48 hours of notice to process medication refills. We are unable to re-fill prescriptions after normal business hours or on weekends.

Common Problems

- **Difficulty Sleeping:** Most patients report more pain at night than during the day; resulting in difficulty sleeping. You may try to incorporate over the counter sleep aids such as Benadryl or melatonin per package recommendations.
- **Leg & ankle swelling:** You may have some swelling in your operated leg that should gradually decrease. If swelling occurs, lie down, rest, and apply an ice pack for 20 minutes.
- **Pain:** Pain may be a result of over-activity. **When you experience an increase in pain sit or lie down, elevate your legs, and rest.** If the pain does not subside, take the pain medication prescribed for you. Pain is a protective mechanism that helps to prevent over-usage and should not be ignored.
- **Call our office at 813-684-2663 if you experience one of the following:**
 - Temperature of 101° or higher
 - Drainage from your incision
 - Increasing redness around your incision
 - Increasing pain around the incision, unrelieved by pain medication
 - Excessive calf pain or thigh pain and swelling that does not go away with rest or elevation.