



## ANKLE POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

**Ankle Surgery**  
**Dr. Colten Luedke**

### MEDICATION

- A strong pain medication has been prescribed for you. Take as instructed and as needed.
  - o Pain medication may cause constipation. You may take an over the counter stool softener (Miralax, Colace, Senekot, etc) to help prevent this problem.
  - o You should take these medicines with food or they may nauseate you.
  - o You may not drive or operate heavy equipment while on narcotics
  - o The first 48 hours are typically the worst for pain and gradually improves.
- **DO NOT** take any medication with Advil or ibuprofen for **two weeks** after surgery as this may impair graft healing.
- Take one baby 81mg **aspirin** once a day for 21 days unless you use another blood thinner, or have a history of stomach ulcers. This will help prevent blood clots in the legs or lungs. Although it is uncommon to develop blood clots after ankle surgery, **blood clots (DVT, PE) can be deadly.**
- Resume all home medications unless otherwise instructed.
- Call immediately to the office, (979) 776-0169, if you are having an adverse reaction to the medicine or have any questions

### ELEVATE, ELEVATE, ELEVATE!!

- Elevate your leg above heart level as much as possible the first 72 hours. We understand that sometimes you need to travel which is safe after surgery. If you feel the ankle “throbbing”, it is due to swelling and you need to elevate the ankle as soon as possible. for several days if you are sitting to help with swelling.
- Moving the toes as much as possible also helps with circulation

### WOUND CARE

Dr. Colten Luedke, Orthopaedic Surgery - (979) 776-0169

[www.BCSortho.com](http://www.BCSortho.com)

[www.DRCLuedke.com](http://www.DRCLuedke.com)



- Immediately after surgery, if you feel your bandages are too tight, you may loosen the ace & splint.
- To shower or bath with your dressing still on, wrap the leg in a large plastic garbage bag with tape at both ends.

## **CRUTCHES**

- Crutches will be needed until your fracture heals which is typically between 6 & 8 weeks

## **SLEEP**

- Nighttime will probably be the most uncomfortable time. If a sleeping aid is needed, try Benadryl 25 mg before bedtime.
- You should sleep with your leg elevated the first 3-4 days

## **COLD THERAPY**

- Ice should be used for comfort and swelling. Use it at least 20 minutes at a time. Many patients use it an hour on then an hour off while awake for the first 2-3 days.
- A simple bag of frozen peas may be used as an inexpensive ice pack. Buy several bags of peas, place in a gallon size zip-lock bag making them about an inch thick and removing as much air as possible. Return to freezer, lying flat after you have finished.

## **BRUISING**

- The lower leg may become swollen and bruised, which is normal. This is from the fluid and blood from the knee moving down the leg and should resolve in 10- 14 days.
- If you experience severe calf pain and swelling, call the office immediately.



**EMERGENCIES** • If you have an emergency contact Dr. Luedke's office at (979) 776-0169 and he will be contacted.

- Contact the office if you notice any of the following:
  - Uncontrolled nausea or vomiting
  - reaction to medication
  - inability to urinate
  - fever greater than 101.5 (low grade fevers 1-2 days after surgery is normal)
  - severe pain not relieved by pain medication/ice/elevation of leg
  - redness or continued drainage around incisions (a small amount is normal for a few days)
  - calf pain or severe swelling.
- **If you are having chest pain or difficulty breathing, call 911 or go to the closest emergency room.**

## **DRIVING**

- You may drive when off all narcotics and have stopped using crutches.
- If your right ankle is the operative side, studies have shown that your break-response time does not normalize until 9 weeks from your injury.
- Consult with your physician before driving if your right foot/ankle is the affected side
- You must be able to brake firmly and comfortably.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the office.