

Postoperative Instructions: Tibia Fracture Surgery

While in the hospital:

Plan to be in the hospital at least overnight, possibly 2 nights.

You will receive pain medications, and be monitored to make sure you are doing well.

You will undergo some physical therapy, mostly to help you know how to walk with crutches safely.

When you get home:

Plan to rest for most of the first week.

Elevate the leg as much as possible, above heart level.

You can get up and go to the bathroom or kitchen, but try not to be up for too long for the first several days.

Use Ice as much as possible. Place over the top of the ankle. Some of it may not reach the leg, but it is still beneficial.
20 minutes on/20 minutes off for regular ice packs.

If you are using a cold therapy machine, use it according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Pain Medication:

Take your pain medication- it's better to stay ahead of the pain.

Oral Narcotic pain medicines (Vicodin/Hydrocodone, Percocet, Tramadol, Codeine) help with pain, but can cause:

Drowsiness: Be Safe, don't drive, operate machinery, don't mix it with alcohol.

Stomach upset: Take with food, or try over the counter Zantac or Tums.

Constipation: Drink enough fluids, use fiber supplements (Metamucil, Senokot)

Take Prune juice or Milk of Magnesia if still constipated after 2 days

You may take anti-inflammatory medication to help with pain and swelling.

Some patients are prescribed Toradol (Ketorolac): take every 6 hours for 4 days.

Ok to take with Pain Medications, not with other anti-inflammatories

After 4 days of Toradol, you can take other anti-inflammatory medicines like:

Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin), Naproxen (Aleve), Lodine, Mobic, Celebrex

Go easy on the anti-inflammatory medications if you have stomach problems.

Activities and Restrictions:

You HAVE TO use crutches and remain NON-weightbearing for 4-6 weeks.

First week: You'll be in the splint we placed after surgery.

At the first postop visit, we'll remove the stitches and place a removable cast boot walker.

For the first week or two, you may get up to the bathroom or kitchen, but avoid being up too long.

You can rest the weight of the foot on the ground if you are standing

Exercises:

Begin gentle exercises immediately:

Tighten and release your thigh and hip muscles (called Isometric Exercises).

Move the knee and hip gently to keep them from getting stiff.

These exercises help prevent blood clots in the leg.

Dressing and Wound Care:

Keep the postoperative splint clean and dry.

You may take a shower, but use a heavy plastic bag and tap the top around the leg to keep water from getting in.

Use a shower chair or plastic shower chair to sit on in the shower.

On the other leg, keep using the white stocking on your other leg for 2-3 days. It prevents blood clots.

Rehabilitation:

You will likely start some supervised physical therapy about 4 weeks after surgery.

You will get some light exercises to get the knee and ankle moving, and to help with swelling.

Problems or Questions? Call us at 925.600.7020

Feel free to call us if you have any concerns, or if you have any:

Unrelenting pain, or increasing swelling or numbness, or high fever (above 101.5)

Continuous drainage or bleeding that is soaking your splint/cast.

Chest pain, shortness of breath