

ANKLE LIGAMENT REPAIR SURGERY POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

- Bleeding through the dressing is normal. Expect some reddish staining of the splint near the surgical site.
- An ACE wrap with additional gauze pads may be used to cover this up and reinforce the dressing/splint.
- No weight should be put on the leg for 2 weeks. You may use crutches or a walker to aid in mobility.
- Elevate the leg on 2-3 pillows as much as possible the first two weeks.
- Ice helps with swelling and any pain.
- On your first visit after your surgery, we will remove the splint and stitches and put a walking cast on your ankle.
- You may walk as much as you want in this cast.
 - ▶ At the second visit, the cast will be removed and we will give you a boot to walk in as much as possible. We will also give you a brace that you may sleep in beginning the 6th week after your surgery.
 - ▶ Therapy will start at this point, 4-6 weeks after surgery.
 - ▶ Therapy will be very gentle for the first two weeks. At the sixth week after surgery, the therapy will become harder and you will do more activity. Therapy will help you gain back unconscious position sense, reactions, balance, strength and the ability to participate in sports. If you had a heel bone restructuring too, this will not slow down your rehabilitation.
 - ▶ Therapy is extremely important to have the best outcome possible from this surgery.
 - ▶ Pool therapy will be ordered also.
 - ▶ You will go from the boot to a brace as you get stronger and better balanced. This should happen by the 10th week.
 - ▶ Eventually, you will go to simple ankle taping.
 - ▶ Swelling may persist for at least a year.
- At week 4 you may sleep in the brace we order for you, and if brake reaction time is OK, you may drive in the brace; however, you still need the boot for walking.
- You might want to practice driving in a parking lot before getting on the road in traffic. This is also something your therapist may help you with. I will not be able to fully assess your ability to drive of course, but usually around this time patients are able to do so safely. You may drive once your brake reaction time is adequate, a brace should be worn and the boot should be put back on once you leave the vehicle.

Typically, you will still need a soft brace with support slats even after surgery, to protect the soft-tissue work. Some people require ankle taping for a long time after surgery. Ankle taping is something the therapist can show you. This is similar to the ankle taping seen in the NFL.

- ▶ Vitamin E capsules may be crushed and applied to the wound to improve the scar. Alternatively, you may use lotion containing Vitamin E, Cocoa Butter, and Aloe Vera and massage 3 - 4 times per day after the wound is completely healed. This can be purchased at Wal-Mart or other stores.
- ▶ Keeping the scars covered with antibiotic ointment and a bandage can reduce the size of the scar also.
- ▶ Vitamins C (5000 mg), D3 (4000 I.U.), and calcium (1200mg) daily in divided doses, will assist in your healing.
- ▶ Constipation may occur with calcium and pain medication. Senokot-S can be purchased over the counter in most drug stores for this problem. A high fiber diet and/or Metamucil may also help with constipation.

Some people have itching with pain medication. This is usually what is called 'an opioid reaction'. Try Benadryl OTC (25mg) up to three times a day for this or Claritin (OTC) 10mg if the Benadryl makes you too sleepy. If the itching persists, we can switch the pain medication.

- Showering is OK once you are out of the initial splint or the casts.
- Once you are in a boot or brace and you have a wound dressing that is to be changed everyday, we encourage cleaning the incision site with soap and water.
- Please be gentle and do not scrub this area. Do not soak the wounds in a tub until 2 months after surgery.
- If you do shower, please maintain the weight-bearing status consistent with the time-period you are in. For instance, at week 3 you still might be non-weight bearing. This may require a shower seat (please let us know).
- Dry the wound with a hair dryer on cool or pat dry with a towel. Do not clean wounds with peroxide nor alcohol.

DR. WARNER'S POLICY ON NSAID MEDICATION

NSAID = Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs

Aleve, Naproxen, Naprosyn, Ibuprofen, Advil, Motrin, Etc...

DO NOT TAKE NSAIDs UNTIL 6 WEEKS AFTER SURGERY UNLESS I GIVE YOU PERMISSION TO DO SO.

This is very important. Many scientific studies have shown us that this type of medicine dramatically slows down and weakens healing. If you hurt, take your pain medication we prescribed. and elevation. If you have swelling, use ice and elevation.

Thank you and we look forward to a great recovery for you!

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