

ANKLE SURGERY POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS



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FINDINGS:

- Tendon Tear
- Arthritis (diffuse cartilage wear)
- Cartilage injury or defect
- Synovitis (Joint lining irritation)
- Loose Body
- Anterior impingement (bone spurs)
- Fracture
- Other : _____

PROCEDURES:

- Removal of synovitis (inflamed joint lining)
- Removal of loose body
- Microfracture of cartilage defect
- Bone spur removal
- Chondroplasty (smoothing of cartilage)
- Brostrom Ligament Repair
- Fracture Repair
- Other : _____

DRESSING & INCISION CARE

- Keep dressing and splint/cast/brace/boot in place until seen at first post-op appointment. Cover with plastic for showering or use towel or sponge baths. Do not get the dressing or splint wet. **DO NOT REMOVE THE DRESSINGS.**
- Keep dressing on and dry for 2 days, then OK to remove. Place Band Aids over each incision if there is any drainage. Otherwise, incisions can be left open to the air.
- Apply ice for 20 minutes out of each hour while awake as needed to control pain and swelling.
- Keep all incisions clean.
- It is normal to have some bloody or clear drainage once dressing is removed. The incisions may also look red for at least a few days.
- Do not remove sutures or thin white strips stuck on your skin. Your therapist or surgeon will do this at your post-op visit in 7-14 days.

FOLLOW UP

- Make an appointment to see Dr. Shah approximately 10-14 days following surgery.
- If an appointment is not already scheduled for you, call the office the day of or the day after surgery. Tell the office that you need to be seen for a post-op check by Dr. Shah.
- Dr. Shah will show you photographs (if taken) from your surgery at your first post-op office visit.

DIET

- Nausea is common for 24-48 hours after surgery due to anesthesia and pain medications. Start with liquids and progress your diet as tolerated to your regular diet.

SHOWERING

- You may shower after 48 hours. It is safest to sit while showering (on a tub bench or non-slip plastic chair or stool) or to have someone help you as your operative leg will be unable to be used to maintain balance.
- DO NOT SUBMERGE YOUR INCISIONS UNDER WATER. No hot tubs, pools or baths until you have been evaluated and cleared to do so by Dr. Shah.
- If you were placed in a splint, use a plastic bag and don't get the splint wet or remove it until follow-up.

MEDICATIONS/PAIN CONTROL

- Use prescribed pain meds as directed. Your prescription was likely called in to your pharmacy.
- You may take over the counter Benadryl as directed for a rash or itching due to pain medications.
- You may use over the counter stool softeners such as Colace for constipation which is a common side effect of pain medications. Use as directed.
- You may use over the counter ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) or naproxen (Aleve) as directed to supplement pain control and to help reduce swelling. Only use these if you have not had any problems with anti-inflammatory medications in the past (gastric reflux, heartburn, stomach ulcers, GI bleeding, kidney problems).
- It is normal to have some pain after most surgical procedures. If your pain medicines, frequent icing, and the supplemental medications above are not adequately controlling your pain or your prescribed medications are not tolerated, please call the office during business hours to discuss adjusting your medications.
- If you are running low on medications, please plan ahead and call the office during business hours to authorize refills. On-call physicians can not typically refill pain medications after business hours.
- If this box is checked, I recommend you begin using an over the counter cartilage nutrient supplement containing glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate (i.e. Osteobiflex, Cosamin DS, Joint Juice). Use as directed.

PHYSICAL THERAPY

- Physical Therapy (PT) is a very important component in attaining a good outcome from your surgery. You should start PT on post op day 1-2 or as soon as possible if it has been ordered for you.
- You should see your therapist several times each week, but you MUST perform the prescribed exercises on your own each of the other days.
- If you are not aware of your therapy appointment or one has not been set up for you, please call the office to inquire about your appointment.
- If you choose to do your therapy at another location outside of our clinic, please provide us with a location name, phone number and fax number so that we may send them a prescription and protocol for your rehabilitation.

WEIGHT BEARING (for operative leg)

- As tolerated with crutches for comfort and balance
- As tolerated in boot/brace with crutches for comfort and balance
- Toe-touch weight bearing with crutches
- Non-weight bearing with crutches

CRUTCHES/WALKER

- Crutches or a walker may be used when non-weight bearing or when weight bearing as tolerated for balance. This may be necessary after having received anesthesia.

ACTIVITY AND BRACING (adhere to all bullets and the checked boxes below)

- Make sure to move the hip, knee, and toes several times per day starting the day of surgery.
- **If** you have been placed in a brace/ boot, use it at all times (including sleep) until you return for follow-up.
- You may remove your brace for hygiene (showering), for physical therapy, and for your home exercises only. While it is off, do not bear weight on the leg or try to walk, pivot, jump or squat.
- Refer to your physical therapist's instructions for additional specific do's and don'ts regarding the ankle.
- Debridement/Partial Synovectomy/Chondroplasty Protocol: You may bear full weight on the operative leg and discontinue use of the crutches as soon as you are comfortable. You are encouraged to move and bend your ankle as much as tolerated as well.
- Brostrom Protocol: Remain non-weight bearing in the splint until seen at f/u visit.
- Achilles Protocol: You may weight-bear as pain allows **IN BOOT ONLY**. No weight-bearing without boot.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- You will have pain, swelling, and soreness around the surgical site for at least a few days.
- It is not uncommon to have soreness in your back, neck, or other extremities from lying on a small operating room table for several hours.
- Having fevers for the first few days after surgery is not uncommon. If temp is >101 degrees or accompanied by chills, sweats, increased pain, redness, or drainage at the incision site, please call us.
- Your toes may be slightly cool and have some tingling. Any true numbness or white digits are a concern. Call the office immediately. Numbness is expected if you had a "nerve block."
- If you had a nerve block performed by anesthesia, your pain will increase as it wears off. Take your pain medicine and stay ahead of the pain. If you have an in-dwelling pain control catheter tube, follow the instructions provided by the anesthesia team and call the number they provided for nerve-block related questions.
- **Nerve Block-** If you had a nerve block performed by anesthesia, your pain will increase as it wears off. Take your pain medicine and stay ahead of the pain. If you have a catheter tube/pump, follow the instructions provided by the hospital and call the number they provided for nerve-block related questions.
- **Blood clots-** A DVT is a blood clot occurring in the veins of your lower leg. It is a rare complication of surgery. If you have calf pain, abnormal swelling, fevers, shortness of breath, or increased heart rate, please contact me or seek evaluation from a medical professional as soon as possible.

CONTACTING US

- The office # is 281-344-1715
- Dr. Shah's medical assistant is Lupe Sanchez: guadalupe.m.sanchez@uth.tmc.edu
- You can call or email her with any problems or questions that may arise
- Please feel free to also visit my website for more information and FAQs at www.SportsDocShah.com.

Vishal Michael Shah M.D. _____