

FRACTURE SURGERY POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS



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PROCEDURE

- Manipulation of bones (no open procedure) and splinting/casting
- Pin or screw placement (fracture fixed through skin: mini-incisions)
- Open reduction and internal fixation (open fracture alignment with implanted hardware)
- Intramedullary nailing
- Other : _____

DRESSING & INCISION CARE (adhere to bullets and checked boxes)

- Keep dressing and splint/cast/brace 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 OR SPLINT.**
- Keep dressing on and dry for 2 days, then OK to remove. Place dry dressings over the incisions as needed after the initial dressing is removed.
- Apply ice for 20 minutes out of each hour while awake as needed to control pain and swelling.
- The incisions may look red for at least a few days. If redness increases, spreads, becomes more painful or is associated with increased drainage, warmth, or fevers, please call the office.
- It is normal for some blood to soak through the dressing. Do not be alarmed. Reinforce the dressing with more gauze as needed. It is also normal to have some bloody or clear drainage on the incision once the dressing is removed.
- Do not remove sutures or thin white strips attached to the skin. Your therapist or I will do this at your follow-up visit.

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 extremity may not be able to be used to maintain balance or bear weight.
- If you were placed in a splint after surgery, cover it with plastic for showering or use towel or sponge baths. Do not get the dressing or splint wet.
- **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.

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.

FOLLOW-UP VISIT

- Make an appointment to see Dr. Shah approximately 7 days after surgery.
- Make an appointment to see Dr. Shah approximately 10-14 days after 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 x-rays of your fracture fixation at your first post-op office visit.

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.

WEIGHT BEARING (for operative extremity)

- As tolerated (use crutches or a walker for lower extremity procedures as needed)
- Non-weight bearing to extremity which underwent surgery (use crutches or a walker for lower extremity procedures)
- Toe touch weight bearing (use foot just to balance and help with transfers) with crutches or walker
- Other : _____

SPLINTS/CASTS/BRACES/SLINGS

- You have been placed in a splint or cast. Keep it clean and dry. Cover it with plastic for showering. Do not remove the splint or cast.
- You have been placed in a sling/brace. 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 extremity or lift anything heavy.
- Your sling/brace/splint is for comfort only. Remove it when comfortable and use it as needed.

ACTIVITY& PHYSICAL THERAPY

- Keep the operative site elevated and iced as much as possible to control swelling.
- Icing 20 minutes out of each hour while awake is important in controlling the pain and swelling.
- You will be given instructions about physical therapy if necessary for your procedure.
- Keep the joints above and below the splinted or braced area moving several times throughout the day to avoid stiffness and to help decrease swelling.

WHAT TO EXPECT/WATCH FOR:

- 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.
- It is not uncommon to have nausea for the first 24-48 hours after surgery until all the anesthesia makes its way out of your system.
- The digits on the affected extremity 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."
- **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. _____