



Orthopedic Surgery • Sports Medicine
Neil Kumar, MD

Post-Operative Instructions – Hip Fracture Fixation

Bandages & Ace Wrap:

Your post-operative dressings are placed under sterile conditions. The bandages contain an anti-microbial layer to help protect against infection. This gives your hip enough time to reduce swelling, help with incision healing, and protect the fracture repair. Your dressings should be changed every 2 days. Your skin can also be irritated by your clothes or if you will be in the sun for long periods of time. Your skin will be extra sensitive to the sun until fully healed so take extra precaution.

Icing:

The best way to minimize swelling after surgery is with the frequent application of ice. The ice pack should be large (like a big zip-lock bag) and held firmly on the hip. Use the ice packs for 20 to 30 minutes every 1-2 hours for the first 3 to 4 days. Also, use it after physical therapy or times of increased activity for the next several weeks.

Walker:

A walker is typically needed after surgery until your strength and mobility are improved. Your therapist will give you specific instructions. You will likely need the walker for at least 3 months or even longer until your motion and strength are improved.

Washing & Bathing:

You will be seen in the office 1-2 weeks after surgery. You may shower and you can use soap on your leg. This shower should be quick and afterwards you should dry all of your incisions very well. Do not take a bath or use a swimming pool until 1 month after surgery. Because lake and ocean water contain bacteria, avoid these for 6 weeks after surgery.

The yellow discoloration you will find on your leg is a long lasting surgical prep called ChlorPrep. This is used because it will kill bacteria on your skin hours longer than old fashion iodine surgical preps. This yellow discoloration will not come off with soap and water, instead you will need rubbing alcohol to remove it. This should be avoided until your first office visit unless it is causing your leg to itch, then it can be removed sooner.

Physical Therapy

Physical therapy starts the next day after surgery. Your therapist will teach you exercises that will be important to do regularly after surgery. They will also teach you how to use the

walker properly so you can walk safely after surgery. Regular physical therapy will begin before your first office visit, and you will start range of motion, gait, and strength exercises on your first visit.

Follow up appointment:

I want to see my patients in the office 1-2 weeks after surgery. Sometimes I find other issues with your hip that we did not anticipate. When these unforeseen circumstances occur, I may want to see you in the office sooner than originally planned.

DVT Prophylaxis – Prevention of Blood clot following surgery:

The risk of a leg blood clot following major surgery is a known risk. The majority of patients that suffer this complication usually have a prior history of a blood clot, a positive family history of DVT, or other unusual risk factors. The medical literature is unclear what method of prevention is best. Your medical doctor will help determine which method is best for you based on the medications you normally take and other factors. You should take medication to prevent a blood clot for at least 3 weeks after surgery.

What to watch out for:

- Pain that is increasing every hour in spite of the pain medication
- Pain or swelling in your calf
- Fever greater than 101°
- Increasing pain with walking
- Unable to keep food or water down for more than one day

Who to Call for Questions and Problems:

If you are having problems or have questions, please call our office at 813-684-3707 (Brandon/Riverview office) or 813-633-0286 (Sun City office) and our nurse will help you. We realize the after surgery some problems or questions are urgent and can not wait until normal working hours. Under these circumstances please call 813-684-3707 anytime (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) and the doctor on-call or I will return your call. If you do not receive an answer within 20 minutes there may be a problem with the beeper so please call again. If an emergency were to occur you can always go straight to the emergency room for immediate attention.

Driving:

You can resume driving after surgery as long as you meet the following precautions. First, you must be weight bearing as tolerated with or without a walker. This ensures that, in the case of an emergency, you can remove yourself from the car safely. Second, you have stopped taking the narcotic pain medication. Third, you should not drive until the pain in the hip has decreased to a tolerable level and the hip has more than 90 degrees of motion. The first time you drive, test your skill in an empty parking lot with another passenger.