



Post Operative Instructions

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Post operative care

Icing: Never apply ice to bare skin. Ice the extremity for periods of 20-30 minutes. If it is difficult to apply ice because of a bulky cast or splint, it is still helpful to apply ice up higher on the injured limb, above the cast or splint.

Elevation: In a reclining position, use pillows to support the limb as high as comfortable above the level of your heart. Ideally, the injured limb will rest 6-20 inches above your heart.

Medication: You may need to take pain medication on a regular schedule for the first 1-3 days after your procedure. After that time, you can begin to decrease your pain medication by taking smaller doses and increasing the time between doses. You may use Tylenol (acetaminophen) instead of your prescription pain medication.

Precautions with Pain Medications

- Pain medication should always be taken with food to avoid an upset stomach. You may split pills in half to take a smaller dose if needed.
 - Nausea and itching may occur with opioid pain medications.
- If you experience these side effects, you may want to decrease your dose of pain medication or stop taking it.



Demonstration of proper elevation of an injury. Note that the injured extremity is elevated well above heart level.

Please consult your physician immediately if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- Increased drainage from the incision
- Increased redness around the operated area
- Increased swelling that does not decrease with ice and elevation
- Foul odor
- Fever greater than 101°F
- Coldness, numbness or blanched white or bluish color of the fingers or toes
- Sudden calf pain
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- You experience a severe fall or blow to the injured extremity; feel bone fragments shift or have severely increased pain.

When do I need to follow-up?

Schedule a follow-up appointment with your provider for 10-14 days after your procedure, unless instructed otherwise by your provider.

Procedure:

Follow up:

Additional Notes:

[illegible]

What things can I do to help with healing?

Eating a balanced diet that includes calcium and vitamin D will help your body build bone to heal. For older people, adequate dietary calcium and Vitamin D, in conjunction with weightbearing exercise, may help to aide in healing.

Stop smoking/tobacco use. People who use nicotine have impaired healing. It is important to discontinue nicotine use while recovering.



Diabetes and anemia. Work with your primary care physician to responsibly manage conditions such as diabetes and anemia. The more well controlled these conditions are, the better your recovery journey will be.

Stick to the Plan. Follow your doctor's recommendations for activity restrictions and modifications.



I have a splint or cast. What do I need to know about it?

The splint or cast will help to hold your bone in proper alignment for the fracture to heal. While casts and splints offer protection from the outside environment, they do not function as "body armor". You still need to use common sense and follow your doctor's instructions to protect the extremity from outside injury.

Keep it dry

Cover the splint with a plastic bag for bathing and even when covered, don't attempt to submerge the cast or splint. If it becomes slightly damp, you may attempt to dry it out with a hair dryer on low heat. If the splint or cast is saturated or you notice odor or skin irritation, call Fremont Orthopaedics.

Leave it alone

Avoid sticking anything inside the cast or splint, as items may break off, get stuck inside, or disrupt inner padding. Don't pull on the exposed padding, as this is intended to protect your skin from rough edges on the cast or splint. If you experience skin irritation, loosening, breaking or splitting of the cast, rubbing at the heel or elbow, or severely increased pain or swelling, call the office for evaluation.

Additional recommendations.

Supportive devices such as crutches, walking boots, surgical shoes, and slings may be provided. These should be utilized to the maximum extent possible as recommended by your surgeon.



Dressings Should be kept clean and dry. If dressings become saturated, loose, or otherwise disrupted, contact the office for a dressing change.



For additional questions call Fremont Orthopaedics at 307-332-9720 Option 2.

Remember...

This document contains general guidelines and is not a substitute to your physician's instructions or an alternative to seeking appropriate medical care or follow-up appointments. For questions or concerns, seek professional medical attention. For medical emergencies, call 911.