Preparing for your fracture stabilization surgery

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Preparations prior to your procedure

- **Ice and elevate** your injured extremity often to decrease swelling and inflammation. This is very important! Severe swelling and inflammation are a source of pain and may cause your surgery to be rescheduled. Never apply ice to bare skin. Use pillows to support your limb above the level of your heart. Ideally, your limb will be elevated 6-20 inches above heart level.
- **Obtain preoperative labs, xrays, EKGs, medical clearance** as advised by your surgeon or other physician. These diagnostic tests are typically performed at Sage West Lander or Riverton.

- **Discontinue use of aspirin, NSAIDs** (ibuprofen, Advil, Motrin, naproxen, Aleve) if you are within 7-10 days of your planned surgery. These medications may cause increased bleeding during the operation or postoperative period. If aspirin, Plavix, Coumadin or another blood-thinning drug is prescribed for a specific health condition, please discuss with your physician. There are exceptions to this guideline, so please ask if you are unsure. Often, you may resume taking these medications the first day following surgery.

- **Decrease smoking/nicotine use**. Smoking and nicotine use impair postoperative healing and increase risks of various complications related to surgery and anesthesia.

Arrangements for the day of surgery

- The surgery department should contact you the afternoon before your surgery to confirm the time of your procedure and when you are expected to arrive.
- **Nothing to eat or drink past midnight the evening prior to surgery**, unless advised otherwise. You may take daily medications with sips of water only.
- **Diabetic patients:** please do not take insulin or oral hypoglycemic medications the morning of surgery.
- Shower or bathe with a gentle soap the night before or morning of your surgery. Avoid harsh scrubbing and do not get splints or casts wet.
- **DO NOT shave** the injured extremity.
- Wear glasses rather than contacts; leave jewelry and valuables at home. **Bring loose fitting clothes** that will fit easily over a bulky cast or splint. Wear **supportive shoes; we do not recommend flip-flops or heels.**
- If you are discharged home after surgery, you will NOT be allowed to drive. **A responsible adult must be able to drive you home and accompany you through the night after surgery**. It is preferable that

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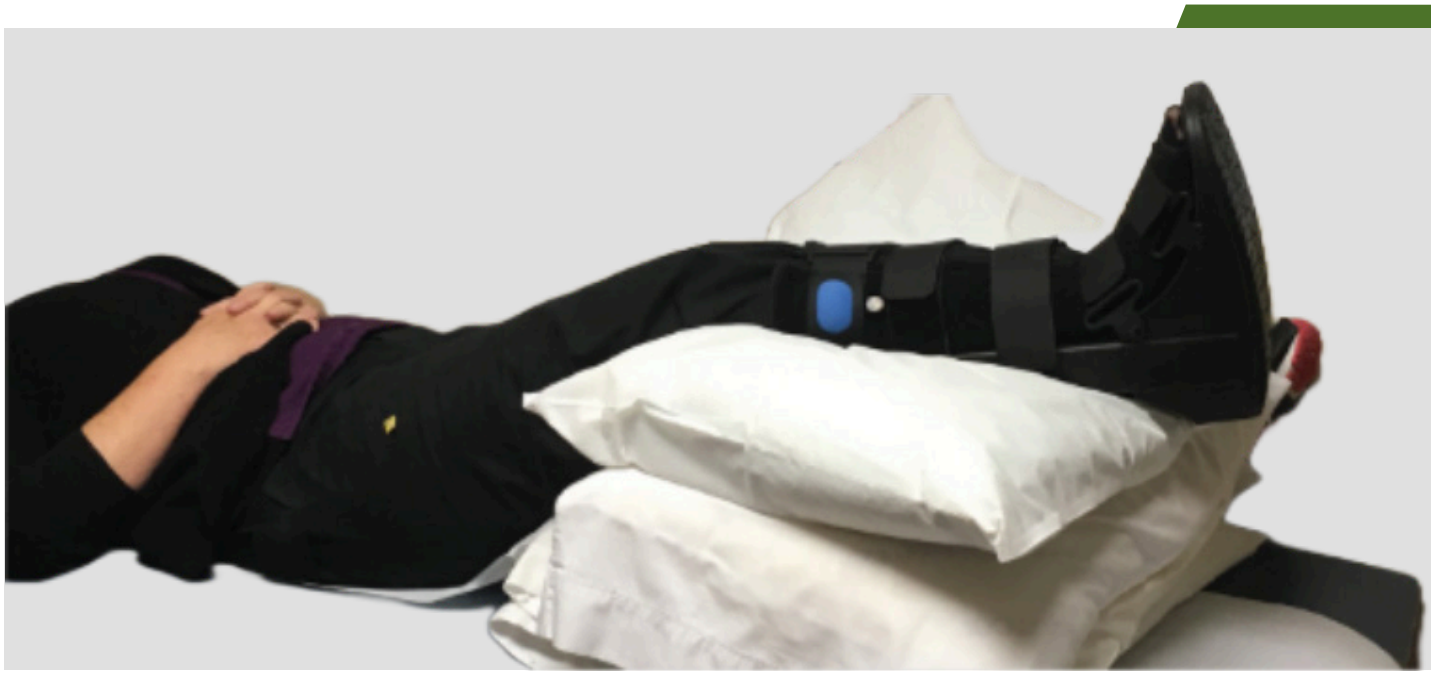

Demonstration of proper elevation of an injury. Note that the injured extremity is elevated well above heart level.

the adult who will serve as your primary caregiver accompanies you to the hospital the day of surgery so that the surgeon can communicate operative results and plan for followup care effectively. This person will also need to participate in discharge teaching by the surgery staff. Most patients have impaired memory of the postoperative time.

- If you are going home the same day, you will likely receive a prescription for medication. This prescription can be filled by the adult accompanying you while you are in the operating room.

Anticipating your rehabilitation needs after surgery

- Many patients go home the same day as their surgery. However, some patients may be admitted to the hospital overnight. This decision is made on an individual basis based on assessment by the healthcare team with input from the patient and family. You will have the opportunity to discuss your surgery with the surgeon both before and after your procedure.
- You will be able to eat and drink what you feel like after surgery. We recommend that you start "little and light" as the anesthesia medications may cause your stomach to be upset. If you are tolerating light foods well you may progress to eating whatever feels good.
- **Following surgery, we will want you to minimize activity and to ice and elevate your surgical limb.** This will help to control postoperative swelling and pain. You will want to have several pillows for elevation and ice in a form that will mold to your limb, i.e. gel ice packs or bags of crushed ice. Circulating cold water machines are extremely helpful, but may be costly. Some patients are able to borrow one from a friend or family member.
- Return to work and school following these procedures is patient specific. However, you should **anticipate requiring 3-5 days of minimal planned activities after surgery**. During the entire time you are taking narcotic medication you should not drive, drink alcohol, or be responsible for tasks that require judgment, coordination, insight, or short term memory, i.e. operating heavy power machinery, childcare, legal/financial decision making.
- You will see the surgeon for **your first postoperative appointment 1.5-2 weeks following surgery**. Fremont Orthopaedics will schedule your followup appointment prior to your surgery.

Questions or Concerns:

Should you develop any new health issues prior to your surgery or if you have further questions or concerns, please call Fremont Orthopaedics at (307)332-9720 Option 2.

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