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POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Patella ORIF

Activity

- Try and rest the first few days following surgery. When sitting or lying down be sure to keep your leg elevated up above the level of your heart to help decrease swelling.
- **Ice** or the **cryo-cuff** can be used as much as possible for the first several weeks to help decrease swelling.
- **Crutches** will be used for the first 6-8 weeks after surgery. You will be instructed by Dr. Day when you may discontinue them.
- You have been placed in a **knee immobilizer**. You will likely have to wear this for the first 6-8 weeks following surgery. The immobilizer needs to be locked (straight) in extension when standing or walking. The immobilizer also must be worn while sleeping at night. You may remove your brace 4-5 times a day for comfort while seated or lying down.
- You can put as much weight on the leg as tolerated when using the crutches and brace.
- Driving is not recommended when taking narcotic pain medication.
- Return to (sedentary) work or school the day after surgery if pain is tolerable. Return to heavy labor or excessive ambulatory activities will be determined by Dr. Day.

Dressings

- Remove the outer dressing and gauze wrap 48-72 hours after surgery. Clean the surrounding skin with sterile water or rubbing alcohol and cover the sutures loosely with band-aids or a clean dressing. Be sure not to vigorously rub over any of the incision sites as they are still healing.
- Small amounts of bloody drainage, numbness at incision site, knee swelling, and bruising are normal findings following surgery.
- Do not use bacitracin or any ointments under band-aids.
- If there are small white tape strips that have been placed across your incision, do not remove them.
- Keep your sutures clean and dry until your first follow-up visit. If you wish to shower, plastic bags, saran wrap, and waterproof dressings can all be used to keep the area dry. **DO NOT SOAK** your knee in a bath tub.

Medication

- Take prescribed pain medication as needed
- You have been prescribed one of the following **pain medications**:
 - Tramadol– Please take 1 tab every 6 hours as needed for severe pain.

*You will be provided only ONE narcotic pain medication prescription- no refills following your surgery**

- Post-operative pain tends to be the most pronounced the first 2-3 days following surgery. Please take Tylenol, 1000mg every 6 hours for the first 3 days as this has significantly less side-effects compared to narcotic pain medication. **Do not exceed 4,000 mg acetaminophen in 24 hours from all sources.**
- You may also have been given a prescription for Zofran, an anti-nausea medication. Please take this medication as needed for nausea
- If you have any side effects (i.e. Nausea, rash, trouble breathing) from medication discontinue its use and call our office.
- Excessive use of pain medication can lead to an increased incidence of side effects and long- term dependency issues. Please take the pain medication as directed and understand that the medications are meant to minimize pain in the initial post-operative phase but may not relieve pain completely.

Physical Therapy

- Schedule Physical Therapy to begin approximately one week after surgery.
- You will receive your physical therapy prescription at your first post-operative visit.

Follow Up

- You have likely already been scheduled for your first post-operative visit. If you have not received an appointment, please contact the office to schedule an appointment 7-10 days after your surgery.
- You will be seen by Dr. Day or his Physician Assistant for your first post-operative visit to review your intra-operative findings and to go over any questions you may have.
- Sutures will also be removed at that time.
- Call the office immediately if you develop a fever (>101.5), chills, excessive incision drainage, calf pain, or persistent lower extremity numbness.
- If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call the office.