



**STERLING RIDGE  
ORTHOPAEDICS  
& SPORTS MEDICINE**

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**POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS - ANKLE FRACTURE SURGERY**

**PLEASE READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS COMPLETELY AND ASK FOR CLARIFICATION  
IF NECESSARY – DIRECT QUESTIONS TO YOUR NURSE BEFORE LEAVING THE  
HOSPITAL OR VIA PHONE TO DR. EILERS STAFF AFTER ARRIVING HOME**

**OFFICE NUMBER: 832.698.0111**

**WHAT CAN I EXPECT AFTER SURGERY?**

- Pain, swelling, and bruising are not unusual after surgery.
- It is normal to feel drowsy, dizzy, or weak 24-48 hours afterward.
- An upset stomach (nausea), vomiting, fatigue, and a low-grade fever (not over 101.4°F) are possible due to medication you received during surgery. These usually improve within 24 hours.

**SPLINT CARE**

- Do not remove your splint. It will be removed at your first post-operative visit.
- Keep your splint clean and dry (cover it to shower). Press and Seal works well with duct tape; alternatively, Amazon.com sells cast bags that work well.
- Call the office if you have any questions/concerns regarding the splint, or if the splint gets wet.

**ACTIVITY**

- Rest at home the day of and the day after surgery. Slowly increase your activity each day as you feel comfortable.
- Do not engage in activities that increase ankle pain/swelling (prolonged periods of standing) over the first 7-10 days following surgery.
- Elevate the operative leg to chest level whenever possible to decrease swelling.
- Do not place pillows under knees (i.e. do not maintain knee in a flexed or bent position), but rather place pillows under foot/ankle.
- Do not put weight through the operative leg. Use crutches or knee scooter to get around.
- Do not drive until your surgeon says it is okay. Do not drive if taking narcotic pain medications.
- If you are planning air travel within 4 weeks of your surgery, please consult with Dr. Eilers office to discuss whether anticoagulation (medication to prevent blood clot) is necessary.

**PHYSICAL THERAPY**

- Physical therapy will start after your first post-operative visit if needed.

## **DIET**

- Drink plenty of fluids. If you are taking pain medication, do not drink alcohol.
- Start by drinking small amounts of fluids, such as water, clear carbonated beverages, tea, or soup.
- Gradually add bland foods to your diet, such as dry toast, soup, or crackers.
- Start with light meals. Resume your regular diet as you feel comfortable.
- Pain medications can cause constipation. Eat fiber (fruits and vegetables) and drink plenty of fluids.
- Take the prescribed stool softener as directed if taking narcotic pain medications.
- If loss of appetite following surgery, use Boost or Ensure meal replacement shakes for nutrition.

## **EMERGENCIES**

- Contact the office if you are having any of these symptoms:
  - Painful swelling or numbness that progressively worsens
  - Fever of 101°F (38°C) or higher
  - Unrelenting pain
  - Persistent nausea and/or vomiting
  - Excessive bleeding or fluid from the surgical site
  - Symptoms of deep vein thrombosis (DVT) such as swelling, redness, warmth, or pain in your calf
  - Inability to urinate
  - Increased drowsiness from pain medication. Stop taking pain/narcotic medication if you become too drowsy
  - Increased or foul-smelling drainage from incision site
  - Significant redness, tenderness, or swelling around the incision
  - Separation of the skin closures

**IF YOU HAVE A NEED THAT REQUIRES IMMEDIATE ATTENTION, PROCEED TO THE NEAREST EMERGENCY ROOM OR CALL 911**