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## **POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS** **ACHILLES TENDON REPAIR**

### **DIET**

- > Begin with clear liquids and light foods
- > Progress to your normal diet if you are not nauseated

### **WOUND CARE**

- > To avoid infection, keep surgical incisions clean and dry – you may shower by placing a large garbage bag over your splint starting the day after surgery – NO immersion of operative leg (i.e. bath)

### **MEDICATIONS**

- > Pain medication is injected into the wound and ankle joint during surgery – this will wear off within 8-12 hours
- > Most patients will require some narcotic pain medication for a short period of time – this can be taken as per the directions on the bottle
- > Common side effects of the pain medication are nausea, drowsiness, and constipation – to decrease the side effects, take medication with food – if constipation occurs, consider taking an over-the-counter laxative
- > If you are having problems with nausea and vomiting, contact the office to possibly have your medication changed
- > Do not drive a car or operate machinery while taking the narcotic medication
- > Ibuprofen 200-400mg (i.e. Advil) may be taken in between the narcotic pain medication to help smooth out the post-operative ‘peaks and valleys’, reduce overall amount of pain medication required, and increase the time intervals between narcotic pain medication usage

### **ACTIVITY**

- > Elevate the operative leg to chest level whenever possible to decrease swelling
- > Use crutches to assist with walking – use a heel-toe pattern when walking, but do NOT bear any weight on your operative leg – unless instructed otherwise by physician
- > Do not engage in activities which increase ankle pain/swelling (prolonged periods of standing or walking) over the first 7-10 days following surgery
- > Avoid long periods of sitting (without leg elevated) or long distance traveling for 2 weeks
- > NO driving until instructed otherwise by physician
- > May return to sedentary work ONLY or school 3-4 days after surgery, if pain is tolerable

### **ICE THERAPY**

- > Begin immediately after surgery
- > Use icing machine continuously or ice packs (if machine not prescribed) every 2 hours for 20 minutes daily until your first post-operative visit – remember to keep leg elevated to level of chest while icing

### **EXERCISE**

- > No exercise or motion is to be done until instructed to do so by your physician after the first post-operative visit
- > Formal physical therapy (PT) will begin about 10-14 days post-operatively with a prescription provided at your first post-operative visit

### **EMERGENCIES\*\***

- > Contact Dr. Weber at \_\_\_\_\_
- Painful swelling or numbness
  - Unrelenting pain
  - Fever (over 101° - it is normal to have a low grade fever for the first day or two following surgery) or chills
  - Redness around incisions
  - Color change in wrist or hand
  - Continuous drainage or bleeding from incision (a small amount of drainage is expected)
  - Difficulty breathing
  - Excessive nausea/vomiting

\*\*If you have an emergency that requires immediate attention, proceed to the nearest emergency room.

#### **FOLLOW-UP CARE/QUESTIONS**

