

## Your surgery involved the following:

### Brace

- ☐ You do not require a brace or splint.
- ☐ You have been placed in a splint. This must stay clean, dry, and intact until your follow-up appointment.

### Physical therapy

- ☐ Begin physical therapy within 7 days. You will be given a protocol to give to your therapist instructing him/her regarding the appropriate mobilization and limitations.
- ☐ Do not begin physical therapy until your first postoperative visit. You will then be instructed when you may begin therapy.

### Activity

#### Weight bearing:

- ☐ **YOU MAY BEAR WEIGHT AS TOLERATED** on operative extremity. Use crutches to assist with walking. Further discussion of the length of time crutches are necessary and brace use are included in your physical therapy instructions. If you had a nerve block, you should not attempt weight-bearing until the block has fully worn off.
- ☐ **DO NOT BEAR ANY WEIGHT ON YOUR OPERATIVE EXTREMITY** Progression to increase weight-bearing status will be done at the instruction of Dr. Remy during your recovery from surgery.

### Post Op Care

*Ice:* Apply an ice bag to the area in a waterproof bag for 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off. Do not place ice directly on the skin. Direct contact for a prolonged period may cause a burn to the skin. If you have a cryotherapy unit use as often as possible for the first 48 hours then as needed. If you have a cryotherapy unit, this is just cold water and can safely be run continuously. I recommend still avoiding direct contact with your skin and checking your skin every few hours and taking a break if very red or irritated.

*Elevation:* Elevate the operative extremity above chest level whenever possible to decrease swelling.

*Activities:* Do not engage in prolonged periods of activity over the first 7-10 days following surgery as this will make your swelling worse. If you had leg surgery, you should avoid long distance traveling for 2 weeks due to risk of blood clots.

*Driving:* **NO driving** until you are no longer taking narcotic pain medicine and adequate range of motion has been gained. You can speak with Dr. Remy and your physical therapist about when you can safely resume driving.

### Dressing changes and incision care

Unless you are in a hard splint, you may change your dressing on **post-op day 3**. (Only patients in a splint need to keep the dressing on until follow-up). For example, if you had surgery on Thursday, you would change your dressings on Sunday. At this point you can take off the Ace wrap and remove the cotton padding underneath. Leave the Steri-strips in place. You may find some minor leakage, this is normal, before wrapping the leg with the Ace, place some gauze over the area. Change your dressings daily afterwards. Keep your incisions covered until you return for your post – op visit.

Do NOT use *any* ointments/creams/lotions on your incisions for the first 4 weeks following surgery. If the incisions have healed with no scabs at that time, you can begin to apply some vitamin E cream if you are concerned about scar formation. You should keep your incisions protected from direct sunlight for the first year with clothing or band-aids to prevent the scars from becoming dark and thickened.

### **Medication**

*Pain medications:* Generally, a short-acting narcotic pain medication is prescribed following surgery. Narcotic medicines may make you drowsy and/or dizzy, therefore driving a car or operating machinery is NOT ALLOWED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE. **Narcotic medicines are addictive and should be taken in the lowest dose and shortest duration needed to control your pain.** Tennessee law now severely limits the amount of pain medications that can be prescribed at surgery. Refills are rarely needed but according to new TN law, you now must be seen in person before a refill can be prescribed. You also must be seen in person in order for the type of prescription medicine to be changed.

**Aspirin:** If you had lower extremity surgery, is recommended that you take a low dose aspirin daily (81mg) for 2 weeks to prevent blood clots. If you have ever had a blood clot (DVT or PE) or have a family history that puts you at high risk, please inform Dr. Remy as she may choose to prescribe a stronger blood thinner.

### **Follow-up care**

**First Physical Therapy Appointment:**

**Post-Op Appointment:**

### **When to call your surgeon**

Call the office for any concern including those below. If after hours or emergent, please call 911 or go to the nearest ER

- Fever > 101.5°F
- Increasing leg or calf pain
- Increasing swelling in calf or foot
- Hives, itching, rashes
- Shortness of breath or chest pain
- Vomiting that lasts more than 8 to 12 hours following surgery
- Drainage from incision sites that continues for more than 5 days follow surgery.

### **SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

☐ Please follow these instructions: