



DR ELTON'S ACHILLES POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

Incision care

- Keep the post operative dressings and splint **on** until your first follow-up appointment in about 2 weeks. (you may shower with the dressings on using garbage bags – use two!)
- **At your first follow-up appointment** we will remove your stitches and apply steri-strips. Water may now run over the incision in the shower, but no soaking in tubs, pools, or other bodies of water (oceans, lakes, and rivers). Please do not remove the steri-strips, they will fall off on their own.
- There is no need to apply Neosporin or other ointments to the incision.
- Please alert us to any pus drainage or redness around the incision that is painful to the touch.

Activity

- **You will be completely non-weight bearing on your surgical leg for 2 weeks.** You will need crutches or a walker to go home with after surgery. If you need crutch training we can have you see the physical therapist before surgery.
- If you have been given a fracture boot, please bring this to your first follow-up appointment. We will show you how to adjust the boot. You will decrease the angle of the boot by 5 degrees every week until you are in the neutral position. We will then unlock motion of the boot for one week, then transition to your normal shoes with a heel lift.
- Elevate your operative leg whenever possible. Elevation means placing your leg above the level of your heart.
- Icing with ice packs or using an ice compression device will significantly help reduce your swelling and pain. Polar care ice machines can be purchased ahead of time for approximately \$200 and are usually not covered by insurance.
- If you need physical therapy, it will likely not begin until 2-6 weeks after surgery. We will decide at your first post-operative when physical therapy begins.
- Please wear the white compressive stocking (TED hose) on your non-operative leg until your first post-operative visit. These are helpful in preventing blood clots and reducing swelling. They may be removed for showering and laundering.
- We recommend no driving while you are taking narcotic pain medicine and while your driving leg is in the boot.

Medications

- We recommend you pick up your prescriptions prior to surgery. Do not take them before surgery unless directed.
- You will receive prescriptions for pain medicines; take these only as you need them. Usually your medication will not contain Tylenol so you may supplement with Tylenol three times a day unless we advise you otherwise. You will also be given a muscle relaxant. Please follow the instructions on the bottle.
- In most cases, you will be prescribed a blood thinner for 2 weeks. Start taking it the morning after surgery.
- You will be given an antibiotic to take for 5 days after surgery to prevent infection.
- While taking narcotic pain medicine, two common reactions are possible.
 - Constipation is the most common side effect. Maintain a diet high in fiber and use any over the counter stool softeners (Colace, Metamucil, Fiber-One, etc.). Drinking plenty of water will help too.
 - Secondly, some people may experience itching or mild rashes with narcotic pain medicine. This can be treated with over-the-counter diphenhydramine (Benadryl) per the package instructions. Breathing problems associated with pain medicine usually require immediate evaluation in the emergency room.
- **Plan appropriately for refill request.** Refills will not be authorized after office hours or on the weekend or holidays. Per our office policy, we have 24 hours to authorize a refill request.
- Please do not take over the counter anti-inflammatories (ibuprofen or Aleve) unless we have told you otherwise.

Follow up appointments

- If a follow up appointment was not scheduled for you prior to surgery, please call the office after discharge from the hospital or surgery center. We would like to see you **10-14 days after surgery** unless we have told you otherwise. We will typically see you again at 6 weeks, 12 weeks, 6 months, and 1 year after surgery.

Emergencies

- Call our office immediately with any questions or concerns. If you feel the emergency is life threatening, go to the nearest emergency room. Due to Dr. Elton and Kelli's clinic and surgery schedules, we will make every attempt to call you back before the end of the day; however, if your need is urgent someone on our staff will assist you until we can be in direct contact with you. For urgent after hour matters, there is a PA on call that can assist you.