



## **Tibial intramedullary nail fixation for fracture Post-operative Orders**

Dr. Abigail Hamilton, MD

You received a block and general anesthesia. Please rest and relax the day of surgery. Be aware of possible dizziness and exercise caution when you are on your feet. **A responsible adult must be with you for the first 24 hours following surgery for safety.**

- Do not drive for 24 hours after surgery or while using narcotic pain medication.
- Do not operate power machinery.
- No important decision-making or signing of legal documents for 24 hours.
- Do not use alcoholic beverages for 24 hours or while taking narcotic medications.
- If you are unable to urinate, feel uncomfortable and it has been 8-10 hours since you last urinated, go to an urgent care or an emergency room

### **Diet:**

- Eat your usual diet. Start with something light like soup or crackers.

### **Wound Care:**

- OK to shower with dressings in place.
- Keep the mepelex patch and tegaderm dressing in place (clear plastic appearing dressing directly adherent to skin) in place x ~3 days. You may shower with this dressing in place.
- Do not scrub the area; just allow water/soap to wash over you.
- Pat incision dry afterward, do not rub.
- Do not bathe/swim/soak incisions until they are completely healed (approximately 4 weeks after surgery).

### **Ice:**

- We recommend that you ice for 48-72 hours post-operatively on a consistent basis and then afterwards as needed. You may use ice packs or icing device. Apply for 20-30 minutes and then remove for a break period of at least 30 minutes to prevent frostbite to skin. Icing devices can be left on longer as they have a protective layer between ice

water and skin. While the bulky operative dressing is in place you may leave on for longer duration as long as it is not in contact with your skin but with the dressing.

- You may come out of the boot to ice.

### **Weight Bearing Status:**

- With Tibial Intramedullary Nail Fixation for Fracture, you will be placed in a walking boot and crutches for comfort.
- You may bear weight through the leg as tolerated.
- You may do gentle ROM exercises to the ankle and knee as tolerated.

### **Physical Therapy:**

- Formal physical therapy will be ordered by your orthopedic surgeon the day of your surgery. You should start formal physical therapy approximately two weeks after surgery.
- Make sure you have an appointment with a physical therapist. If you do not, please call 520-784-6211 and get in as soon as possible.
- Continue the exercises the therapist gives you at home.

### **Pain Control:**

#### Day of Surgery

- You should elevate the leg as much as possible above the level of your heart to minimize swelling. Decreasing swelling significantly improves your pain control.

### **Medications:**

- Resume all your home medicines.
- You will be prescribed a short acting narcotic for home (oxycodone, dilaudid, percocet or norco). Please take this as needed.
- If you are prescribed oxycodone or dilaudid, it is OK to take Tylenol with this medication and doing so will help with pain.
- If you are prescribed Percocet or Norco, these medications already contain Tylenol, and you should not take Tylenol while you are taking these medications.
- We will refill short acting narcotic pain medications as needed.
- Taking an anti-inflammatory medication (NSAID) is recommended unless you are instructed not to do so by Dr. Hamilton or have ever been told not to take these for a medical reason from another physician.
- These include ibuprofen, motril, advil, naproxen, aleve. Please take as directed if prescribed or follow dosing instructions on the bottle if you are taking an over-the-counter medication.

- Zofran (ondansetron)- take 1 tablet every 6 hours as needed. This medication can help resolve some nausea and/or vomiting associated with anesthesia and other medications you are taking.
- These pain medications may be taken in any combination according to how much pain you are having.
- The use of narcotic pain medications can cause constipation. We suggest you use an over-the-counter stool softener while taking these medications (Colace, sennakot).

**Driving:**

- You may resume driving when approved by your orthopedic surgeon.

**Return to Work:**

- You may return to work as soon as you are comfortable. This is dependent on your job type. You will not be able to bear weight for 6-8 weeks. Return to work notes if required can be obtained from your orthopedic surgeon at your first post-op appointment.

**Follow-up Appointment:**

- Follow-up- Please make sure that you have a post-operative appointment set up for 10-14 days and in 6-8 weeks after your surgery with Dr. Hamilton. Please call 520-784-6211 to schedule if this was not arranged at the time you booked surgery or if you have any need to change a date/time of the appointment.

**Please call the office between 8:00 am – 5:00 pm at 520-784-6211, or the After Hours Clinic at 520-784-6441, if you experience any of the following:**

- Fever over 101 degrees for more than 24 hours
- Foul drainage, redness or warmth at the operative site
- Large amounts of bleeding or drainage
- Severe or uncontrolled pain
- Persistent nausea or vomiting
- Hives, rash or medication intolerance

\*\*\* Call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Room if you experience shortness of breath, redness, warmth and extreme pain in the calf. These are signs of a blood clot.\*\*\*

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