Dr. Hjelm's Foot & Ankle Surgery Instructions

POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS

DRESSINGS:

- Leave the bandages, boot, and/or split on until your return to see Dr. Hjelm unless instructed otherwise. Some bleeding into the bandages is normal.
- Keep bandages clean and dry. Call office if the bandage gets wet.

BATHING:

Cover the boot in a cast cover. If the cast is on your leg, we recommend that you sit down on a shower stool or hang the casted extremity over the side of the tub. Or take sponge baths.

ACTIVITY:

- Please be mindful of weight bearing status or instructions the nurse and Dr. Hjelm counseled you on. Use assistive devices such as walker, crutches, cane or knee scooter as instructed.
- Elevate your foot/leg to heart level with ice behind your knee, this cools blood down before it goes to your foot. Ice for 15 minutes every hour the first few days. If you have increased swelling or throbbing, better elevation and icing is recommended.
- Movement of non-surgical extremity is helpful to reduce blood clots and keep up strength. Consider moving arms, lifting leg or moving hip and knee as you are able.

MEDICATION:

Take pain medication as prescribed. Make sure to take with food. Don't hold back from taking medications you need, there are no rewards for stopping medications too early. Dr. Hjelm will also make sure you aren't taking too many medications.

DIET:

Advance your diet slowly. Start with liquids and advance to solid food as tolerated. You should be able to return to a normal diet within 24 hours after surgery.

FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT:

The first follow-up appointment is in 10-14 days after surgery. If unexpected issues or problems arise, reach out to our office to review if a sooner appointment is appropriate.

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS:

- Swelling and bleeding is expected. If you have excessive pain, bleeding, or swelling, call Dr. Hjelm's office.
- You may have a slightly elevated temperature for a couple of days after surgery. If your temperature is over 101.5 degrees or lasts over two days, call Dr. Hjelm's office.
- If you develop excessive swelling or pain in the calf or thigh, develop shortness of breath, or develop difficulty breathing, please go to urgent care, your local ER, or call Dr. Hjelm's office immediately. This could be a sign of a blood clot in the legs or lungs, which can be dangerous or fatal.
- Do not drive, drink alcohol, use power tools or make any important decisions for 24 hours after your surgery.
- Arrange to have someone accompany you home and stay with you for 24 hours. You may not leave the surgical facility alone.
- When changing positions from lying to sitting to standing, do so slowly.

SIMPLICITY Health

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