

Postoperative Instructions- Inpatient Total Joint Arthroplasty

DIET

- Begin with clear liquids and light foods (jello, soups, etc)
- Progress to your normal diet if you are not nauseated

WOUND CARE

- Shoulder Arthroplasty patients will have staples in the incision
- Knee Arthroplasty patients will have steri-strips over incision
- Maintain your operative dressing, loosen bandage if swelling or tingling of the extremity (hand or foot)
- It is normal for the wound to bleed and joint swell from the surgery site- if blood soaks onto the bandage, do not become alarmed- reinforce with additional dressing
- If blood saturates more than 2 bandages call Borgess Orthopedics at (269)343-1535
- To avoid infection, keep surgical incisions clean and dry- NO complete immersion of operative joint until first post operative visit

MEDICATIONS

- Most patients will require some narcotic pain medication for a short period of time- pain prescription will be given at time of discharge
- Common side effects are constipation, nausea, vomiting, sleepiness
- If nausea and vomiting continues for more than 12-24 hours contact the office to have your medication changed (269)343-1535
- Do not drive a car or operate machinery while taking the prescription pain medication
- Ibuprofen 600mg 3 times per day (ie Advil) may be taken in between the narcotic pain medication to help smooth out the post-operative 'peaks and valleys' (if you do not have a history of bleeding or ulcers), and may decrease overall amount of prescription pain medication required, and increase intervals between narcotic pain medication usage
- Increase vegetables, whole grains, and water intake to decrease risk of constipation related to pain medications
- Drink a full glass of water with every dose of medication (prescription or over the counter) and with food

ACTIVITY

- When sleeping or resting, inclined positions (ie recliner chair) and a pillow under the forearm for support may provide better comfort
- Do not engage in activities which increase pain/swelling
- Avoid long periods of sitting or long distance traveling for 2 weeks
- NO driving or operating heavy machinery until you are off all prescription pain medications
- NO driving for 2-3 weeks following surgery
- Generally off work for 4-6 weeks

SLING (Shoulder Arthroplasty)

- Wear sling/immobilizer at all times until first post operative visit
- Movement of fingers/hand/elbow is important
- Do not lift anything with the operative arm until otherwise told (possibly at first operative visit)

- Avoid movements to the side or over head

ICE THERAPY

- Continue icing and elevating joint when you get home from the hospital

EXERCISE / PHYSICAL THERAPY

- Inpatient Physical Therapy will begin either the day of surgery or the following day (depending on the time of surgery) Physical Therapy sessions are in groups and will be done a few times before you leave the hospital
- You must 'pass' Physical Therapy before you are discharged from the hospital.
- If you would like to go directly to a rehabilitation facility, the hospital will make arrangements for you while you are in the hospital

EMERGENCIES

- Contact Borgess Orthopedics (269)343-1535 if any of the following are present:
 - Painful swelling or numbness, tingling, color change, or coolness in the related extremity
 - 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 or tenderness around incisions
 - Continuous drainage or bleeding from incision (a small amount of drainage is expected)
 - Difficulty breathing, wheezing
 - Excessive nausea/vomiting causing inability to keep anything down for 12-24hours or decrease in urination
- Contact Borgess Orthopedics (269)343-1535 immediately if pain in the calf or lower leg is accompanied by redness/tenderness and warmth

WHAT TO EXPECT AT YOUR FIRST POST OPERATIVE VISIT

- Follow up X-rays will be taken
- Removal of steri-strips (knee arthroplasty) or staples (shoulder arthroplasty)
- Wound check for healing and signs of infection

NORMAL POST OPERATIVE SYMPTOMS

- Operative joint will be warm
- Clicking in the knee
- Swelling and bruising of the related extremities (blood pooling from the trauma)