

Joint Replacement, Sports Medicine,  
Fracture Care & General Orthopaedics

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## **ANKLE ORIF (Open Reduction, Internal Fixation) - Postoperative Instructions**

**Follow-up appointment:** Our office will call you the next business day after surgery to schedule a postoperative visit (usually 10 days after surgery). At that time you will be given the opportunity to ask questions about your surgery or discuss any difficulties you may have.

**About your dressing:** Your ankle is placed in a temporary splint that needs to **remain on and kept clean and dry**. You may shower but be sure that the splint is covered and out of the flow of water. You have stitches that will need to be removed at your follow-up visit.

**About pain and swelling:** Some discomfort is to be expected following this surgery. Your surgeon uses a local anesthesia at the ankle that will provide pain relief for 6-10 hours following surgery. The best way to control the discomfort is to keep the leg elevated (above the level of the heart) and apply ice (enclosed in a plastic bag and wrapped in a dry towel) to the ankle for 20 minutes out of an hour, repeating as needed.

For pain, use the narcotic medication that your doctor ordered. Please do not combine narcotics with alcoholic beverages.

Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatories (like Motrin, Advil or Aleve) may be used with or instead of the narcotic medication.

**Postoperative activities:** You will be provided with a removable boot at your follow-up visit and will be instructed on appropriate exercises for your ankle at that time.

\_\_\_\_\_ Apply as much weight to the leg as is comfortable, using the crutches only as needed for comfort. Avoid strenuous activities.

\_\_\_\_\_ Use crutches at all times. Apply only minimal weight to the operative leg, **just enough to maintain balance while using the crutches**.

**Return to work/driving:** Return to work will depend on your work duties- this should be discussed with your surgeon.

Please do not drive for 24 hours after surgery.

\_\_\_\_\_ LEFT ankle - OK to resume **driving when you are no longer taking narcotics**

\_\_\_\_\_ RIGHT ankle - no driving until cleared by your surgeon

**Warning signs:** If you have fevers or chills, the pain is not manageable, there is bloody drainage or pus, red streaking up your leg, calf pain, shortness of breath or if you have any other questions, **please call our office at #978-534-6333**.