



3030 Executive Drive, Venice FL 34292 – 941-485-1505

Post Op Surgical Packet for Total Hip Arthroplasty:

Additional Information about your Post Op care.

In most cases, we will have a Home Health Nurse and a Home Health Physical Therapist come to your home. However, there are certain things you can do to participate in your own recovery. This information packet should be referred to should you have any questions, or if Home Health is not provided. The only circumstance that will prevent us from setting up home health will be your individual insurance policy. While your individual policy may state that Home Health is a benefit, if we are unable to secure an agency in the area that participates with your insurance, please follow these instructions.

Wound Care:

- After surgery, wounds are typically covered with adhesive dressing. This will be changed the day after surgery by a Home Health Nurse. If you have to change the dressing on your own, you will want to purchase dry, sterile dressings.
- Skin stitches, or staples will be removed in the clinic. In some cases, there may not be anything to remove.
- You may shower after surgery with a watertight dressing in place. Do not submerge the wounds in water (bathtub, pool, ocean, etc) until 6 weeks after surgery. You can discontinue the watertight dressing for your showers once your post op appointment has been completed.
- If your dressings become saturated or drainage continues beyond the first 3 days after surgery, please call the office.

Icing:

- Icing is an important part of recovery from surgery, it is used to decrease swelling and inflammation. For the first 48 hours, you should ice every waking hour for 20 minutes. And then you should be icing every few hours for the first 2-3 weeks after surgery, especially before and after your Physical Therapy or Home exercises.

Diet:

- After surgery, some patients experience nausea. This can be related to anesthesia or pain medications. It is best to begin with clear liquids, and light food. You may progress slowly to your normal diet if not nauseated.
- Patients will be prescribed anti-nausea medication after surgery. This can be used to treat nausea. If nausea or vomiting persists despite the medication, please call the office.
- Pain medication can also cause constipation. An over-the-counter laxative, high fiber diet or fruit juice may be helpful.

Medication:

- Most home medications may be resumed after surgery unless specifically directed by your surgeon.
- Patients are given pain medication for post op pain. Please take this medication as instructed to control your pain. The goal is to decrease the use of this medication as pain improves after surgery.
- Take your pain medication with food to help decrease nausea.
- Some pain medication may already have Tylenol (Acetaminophen) mixed with it. Do not take any other medication that includes Tylenol while taking these pain medications. Taking too much Tylenol can cause liver damage.
- Pain medication can be taken prior to bedtime to help with sleeping.
- Do not drink alcohol, or drive while taking pain medication.
- Pain medication will not take away all your post op pain. It is okay to have some discomfort.
- Because of the risks of prolonged narcotic use, in most cases narcotic pain medication will not be prescribed after 4 weeks of surgery. Plan to wean narcotic use accordingly.

Blood Clot Prevention:

- Though uncommon, blood clots, also called Deep Vein Thrombosis or DVT can occur after surgery. To decrease the risk of this problem your surgeon may prescribe a blood thinner or aspirin. We will send this prescription to your pharmacy with your pain medications. If you are prescribed an aspirin, a pharmacist may tell you to purchase over the counter aspirin rather than fill it as a prescription. Please take this as instructed by your surgeon. In most cases for aspirin, this will be prescribed to take 2 times a day.
- Elevation of the operative leg above the heart will also decrease swelling and prevent blood clots.

Activity:

- A walker should be secured prior to surgery, and you should bring this to the hospital or surgery center with you.
- You may bear full weight on the operated leg immediately after surgery.
- Return to work depends on your job requirement, specifics of your surgery and pain/swelling levels. You should be off work until your first Post Op appointment and can discuss returning with your surgeon at that appointment.
- Physical Therapy will be prescribed after surgery. This is an important part of your recovery, and we encourage patients to participate.
- Driving after surgery should wait until your first post op appointment. You should not resume driving until you are fully off narcotic pain medication, and you can safely transition from the gas to the brake of your vehicle. The length of time to return to driving will depend on your surgeon, and the surgical leg.

Reasons to call the office:

- Fever above 101.5
- Excess of pain or swelling of the calf
- Excess draining at the surgical incision after day 3 of your surgery.
- Worsening pain in the operative leg not controlled with medication.
- Excess nausea or vomiting.
- Constipation that lasts more than 3 days.