

Post-Operative Tip Sheet



- Activity:** Limit activity for 24 hours following surgery. Increase activity after 24 hours as tolerated.
- Bandage:** For total joints (shoulder, hip and knee) your incision will be covered with a bandage and will be removed at your first post op appointment. For most other surgical procedures you can remove the bandage after 3 days unless otherwise instructed by the provider. If you have questions regarding your bandage please call our office at 247-4667 South Bend or 540-2500 Plymouth.
- Braces:** For certain surgeries you may be provided a brace for your arm/leg or a sling. The brace is to be worn at all times unless instructed otherwise by the provider or when showering and doing home exercises.
- Dental:** Prophylactic antibiotics will be prescribed by our office for any routine dental cleaning or dental procedure done following a total joint replacement. The antibiotic should be taken one time at least 45 minutes prior to the dental appointment.
- Driving:** You will be instructed at your first post-op visit as to when you can safely drive. You should not drive while taking narcotic medication.
- Incision:** Staples or stiches will be removed at the first post op visit in our office 10-14 days after surgery. If you notice drainage from your incision or it appears the incision is opening prior to that appointment call our office for assistance or go to the local emergency department.
- Infection:** If you have a fever greater than 101 degrees call the office immediately (247-4667). Other signs of possible infection include pain, swelling, warmth, redness, drainage, and/or red streaks from incision.
- Pain Medication:** You will receive a prescription for pain medication the day of surgery. You will also sign a treatment agreement with our office explaining the expectations for proper usage of the pain medication. You will be weaned off the pain medication during your post op period. Refills for lost, stolen, damaged, or misused narcotics will not be given. Pain is to be expected following surgery but should get better with each day.
- Shower:** You may shower 3 days following surgery. Keep the incision covered with plastic wrap. No baths or whirlpools until sutures or staples are removed.
- Swelling:** Swelling in your operative leg/arm is not uncommon and is expected for the first 3-6 months following surgery. Normal swelling is reduced in the morning and will increase during the day and with activity. Reduce swelling by elevating your leg or lying down. You may also use ice to help with swelling.
- Weight bearing:** Following certain surgeries you will use a walker, cane or crutches and be partial weight bearing. During your first post op appointment you and the provider will discuss weaning you off this as your gait, balance and pain level improves. Your therapist will also help with determining this.