

# POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

## ACHILLES TENDON REPAIR

### **DIET**

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

### **WOUND CARE**

- ⌚ To avoid infection, keep surgical incisions clean and dry – you may shower by placing a large garbage bag over your splint starting the day after surgery – NO immersion of operative leg (i.e. bath)

### **MEDICATIONS**

- ⌚ Pain medication is injected into the wound and ankle joint during surgery – this will wear off within 8-12 hours
- ⌚ Most patients will require some narcotic pain medication for a short period of time – this can be taken as per the directions on the bottle
- ⌚ Common side effects of the pain medication are nausea, drowsiness, and constipation – to decrease the side effects, take medication with food – if constipation occurs, consider taking an over-the-counter laxative
- ⌚ Do not drive a car or operate machinery while taking the narcotic medication
- ⌚ Ibuprofen 200-400mg (i.e. Advil) may be taken in between the narcotic pain medication to help smooth out the post-operative ‘peaks and valleys’, reduce overall amount of pain medication required, and increase the time intervals between narcotic pain medication usage

### **ACTIVITY**

- ⌚ Elevate the operative leg to chest level whenever possible to decrease swelling
- ⌚ Use crutches to assist with walking – use a heel-toe pattern when walking, but do NOT bear any weight on your operative leg – unless instructed otherwise by physician
- ⌚ Do not engage in activities which increase ankle pain/swelling (prolonged periods of standing or walking) over the first 7-10 days following surgery
- ⌚ Avoid long periods of sitting (without leg elevated) or long distance traveling for 2 weeks
- ⌚ NO driving until instructed otherwise by physician
- ⌚ May return to sedentary work ONLY or school 3-4 days after surgery, if pain is tolerable

### **ICE THERAPY**

- ⌚ Begin immediately after surgery
- ⌚ Use icing machine continuously or ice packs (if machine not prescribed) every 2 hours for 20 minutes daily until your first post-operative visit – remember to keep leg elevated to level of chest while icing

### **EXERCISE**

- ⌚ No exercise or motion is to be done until instructed to do so by your physician after the first post-operative visit
- ⌚ Formal physical therapy (PT) will begin about 10-14 days post-operatively with a prescription provided at your first post-operative visit

### **EMERGENCIES\*\***

- ⌚ Painful swelling or numbness
- 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 around incisions
- Color change in wrist or hand
- Continuous drainage or bleeding from incision (a small amount of drainage is expected)
- Difficulty breathing
- Excessive nausea/vomiting

\*\*If you have an emergency after office hours or on the weekend, call the office and you will be connected to our page service – Do NOT call the hospital or surgicenter.

\*\*If you have an emergency that requires immediate attention, proceed to the nearest emergency room.