
Discharge Instructions for Foot Surgery

Arrange to have an adult drive you home after surgery. If you had general anesthesia, it may take 1 or more days to fully recover. So for at least the next 24 hours:

- Don't use machinery or power tools.
- Don't drink alcohol.
- Don't make any major decisions.

Diet

Here are some dietary suggestions following surgery:

- Start with liquids and light foods, like dry toast, bananas, and applesauce. As you feel up to it, slowly return to your normal diet.
- Drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of water or other nonalcoholic fluids a day.
- To prevent nausea, eat before taking narcotic pain medicines.

Medicines

It's important to follow these directions:

- Take all medicines as advised.
- Take pain medicines on time. Don't wait until the pain is bad before taking your medicines.
- Don't drink alcohol while taking pain medicines.

Activity

These instructions are to help with your recovery:

- Sit or lie down when possible. Put a pillow or 2 under your heel to raise your foot above the level of your heart.
- Wrap an ice pack or bag of frozen peas in a thin cloth. Place it over your bandaged foot for no longer than 20 minutes. Do this 3 times a day.
- Ask your surgeon when you can resume driving.
- Wear your surgical shoe as advised if you were given one.
- Use crutches or a cane as directed.
- Follow your surgeon's instructions about putting weight on your foot.

Bandage and cast care

Here are tips to follow:

- Ask your provider when you can take a shower.
- When you can shower, cover the bandage, splint, or cast with a plastic bag to keep it dry.
- Don't remove your bandage until your healthcare provider tells you to. If your bandage gets wet or dirty, check with your provider. You can likely replace it with a clean, dry one.

What to expect

It's normal to have the following:

- Bruising and slight swelling of the foot and toes
- A small amount of blood on the dressing

Call your healthcare provider

Contact your surgeon right away if you have any of the following:

- Continuous bleeding through the bandage
- Excessive swelling or increased bleeding
- Warmth or redness around the dressing or surgical site
- Fever over 100.4°F (38°C), or as advised by your surgeon
- Chills
- Pain unrelieved by pain medicines
- Foot feels cold to the touch or numb
- Increased pain in your leg or foot
- Swelling in the calf above the treated foot,
- Anything unusual that concerns you

Call 911

Call 911 if you have either of these:

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath