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Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon – Surgery of Hip & Knee

ORTHOPAEDIC SURGERY

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

I. ACTIVITY LEVEL:

- A. Rest with elevation of the operated limb as often as possible. (For the arm above the level of the shoulder, for the leg above the level of the hip). Continue this until pain and swelling have mostly subsided.
- B. You may apply ice in a bag to the operative region for 10-15 minutes at a time, no more than once every hour. Take care not to injure the skin by direct application of freezing temperature. Take care not to disturb the dressing or traumatize the wound.
- C. Begin gently moving the limb as pain allows **unless otherwise advised**.
- D. Your deep breathing, calf pump and range of motion exercises should be done 3-5 times daily.

II. MEDICATION

A. Prescription medicine may be given to you prior to discharge. Prescription medicines may make you drowsy and/or dizzy, therefore driving a car or operating machinery is not allowed. Simple analgesic (pain relief) medicine with paracetamol only may be substituted for prescription medication as your pain permits.

III. CARE of INCISIONS

- A. Leave the entire dressing clean, dry and intact until your first post-operative review if possible. If the outer dressing becomes too dirty or loose, leave the inner adhesive dressings intact. If all dressings are inadvertently removed, cover puncture wounds with band-aids or incisions with new dressing and keep the area clean and dry.
- B. Keep the incision clean and dry after surgery. Showering is permitted, keeping the affected area dry by wrapping region with a plastic bag. No baths or swimming until the incision is completely healed, (about 2 weeks). Routine showering may be resumed after first post-operative visit.
- C. Once skin edges of the incision have healed scars can be massaged with a vitamin E cream. Scars may be kept covered with clothing or sunscreen when out in sunlight to minimize discoloration.
- D. Some numbness around the incisions is normal during healing.

This information should serve as a general guide after surgery. As this is general information, your own care may be modified based upon the specific nature of your surgery and general condition.