

POST OPERATIVE CARE

This information is general. Your individual needs will be discussed with you, after your surgery has been performed. Please feel free to clarify any questions you may have with Dr Maine

1. Cast Care

- Please keep your cast dry and clean. You will need to wrap it in a plastic bag for baths.
- It is important to elevate the affected limb to prevent excessive swelling for at least 2 days post surgery. This may be in a sling or on pillows if lying down. It must be above the level of your heart to be effective.
- Unless told otherwise, do NOT put weight through a cast on the lower leg.

2. Wound Care

- You may de-bulk the dressings (if there is a bandage) by taking off the bandages at 3 days. You will be given some waterproof dressings at the time of your discharge that can be placed over the wounds to keep them clean. You are able to shower with these in place and gently pat them dry.
- Unless specifically told otherwise, you will have an absorbable stitch used to close the wound which does NOT need to be removed.
- It is possible that the ends of this stitch are visible and hang outside the skin at each end of the wound. Do not pull at these, they can be cut back at the same level as your skin by your GP or practice nurse when reviewed at your post op appointment
- You may shower in 3 days with the incision covered with the waterproof dressings. Keep them clean and dry.
- Do not get into a pool until two weeks after your surgery.

2. Crutches and Mobility

- You may require crutches or upper limb immobilization such as a sling.
- Non-weight bearing is no weight at all through your affected leg.
- Partial weight bearing is usually up to 50% of your body weight.
- Full weight bearing can be with or without crutches for balance and support.

3. Physiotherapy

For the first two weeks until formal physical therapy, you should do the exercises advised by *Dr Maine*:

- It is sensible to book an appointment at the 2 week mark post surgery
- No weight lifting or water therapy during first two weeks.
- If an exercise is very painful, stop doing it or do it within the limits of motion that is not painful.
- Major therapy gains are not achieved during the first two weeks. This is mainly a recuperative period.

5. Pain Control

- You will be able to take standard pain killers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen unless you have contraindications to these drugs or are advised otherwise by Dr Maine. It is important to take these pain killers routinely in the immediate post operative period, as they provide a good level of base line pain relief upon which the stronger pain killers can work – if they are required.
- You may be prescribed additional stronger pain killers such as opioids (narcotics) if it is anticipated your pain may be severe post operatively
- Use the medicine as prescribed and **do not drive**, drink alcohol, or perform duties that require concentration (i.e. school or work) while on narcotic medication.
- It is important to combine medication with rest and elevation.

CONSULTING ROOMS

North West
Specialist Centre
Suite 7 137a Flockton Street
Everton Park QLD 4053

P 07 3177 2779
F 07 3188 7649
E reception@qldlrc.com.au
W qldlrc.com.au

WHAT IS TO BE EXPECTED:

After surgery, there is a variable amount of pain and swelling, often depending on how much surgery was done. This usually diminishes after several days. It is helpful to keep the leg or arm elevated above your heart and to apply ice regularly.

WHAT SHOULD BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY:

Signs and symptoms to report:

- *persistent fever*
- *sudden increase in pain or swelling*
- *wound redness, drainage, or increased skin temperature around the incision*
- *increasing numbness*
- *deep calf pain and/or swelling*
- *shortness of breath*

Who to call:

- If you have any problems please call Dr Maine's rooms on (07) 3177 2779
- In case of an emergency, please present to your nearest Hospital and leave a message on the above number informing us of your situation
- You should have a post-op appointment scheduled in 14 days. If you do not, please call the rooms.