

Discharge Instructions after General Anesthesia

- Pain medication has been prescribed for you. Begin taking scheduled pain medication immediately. You may begin taking prescribed narcotics if/when pain becomes uncontrollable by scheduled medications.
 - **Shoulder/arm nerve block: You may have mild shortness of breath, numbness on the side of the face after the nerve block, this is normal.**
 - **Knee nerve block: Do not put pressure on the operative leg until the block has completely worn off.**
- **DO NOT TAKE TYLENOL (ACETAMINOPHEN) UNLESS INSTRUCTED OTHERWISE OR USE ONE OR THE OTHER-NOT BOTH.**
- Pain medications (opioids) can cause constipation. You may use OTC Senakot, Colace, Miralax or stool softener of choice as needed. Increasing your water and fiber intake will be beneficial.
- If you receive compression socks at the surgery center. Please keep your compression socks on for the first 3 days to help prevent blood clots. These socks can be slippery so please wear socks or slippers with a non-skid surface.
- Once you are comfortable at home, it's important to practice deep breathing and coughing so that you'll be able to do the exercises below easily after surgery. These exercises will help your breathing, clear your lungs, and lower your risk of pneumonia.
 - Breathe deeply and cough every hour while you're awake for the first 2 to 3 days after surgery. These exercises work better if you do them sitting up.
- It's also important to move and change your position often. These position changes help to make your breathing and coughing exercises work better.

Deep Breathing Exercises

- Breathe in deeply and slowly through your nose, expanding your lower rib cage, and letting your abdomen move forward.
- Hold for a count of 3 to 5.
- Breathe out slowly and completely through pursed lips. Don't force your breath out.
- Rest and repeat 10 times every hour. Rest longer if you become dizzy or lightheaded.

Foot and Leg Exercises

Do these exercises every hour while you're awake.

Ankle Pumps

- Pump your ankles up and down for 1 minute.
- Relax both feet.
- Repeat 5 times then relax.



B. Ankle Circles

- Circle both ankles; first to the right, and then to the left.
- Repeat 5 times then relax.



Bend each knee one at a time, sliding your foot up along the bed and then back down.
Repeat 5 times then relax.

Eating

- **Start slow!** There are no restrictions to your diet but the general anesthetic slows everything down. Start with non-greasy, lower fat foods.



Bandages and Shower

- The first time that you shower, it is a good idea to have someone “stand by” as the hot water, pain medication and the anesthesia can cause dizziness and lightheadedness.
- If you had arm or leg surgery, you will be provided with a shower shield at the surgery center. Please use this so that your bandages do not get wet. If your bandages or splint do get wet, please call our office to have them replaced.
- Shoulder/Total Replacements: You may shower after your nerve block has worn off. The incision(s) must stay clean and dry. Confirm adequate seal before entering shower.
- Arthroscopic Procedures: You may shower after your nerve block has worn off. The incision(s) must stay clean and dry. Confirm adequate seal before entering shower. After 3 days remove all of the dressings and let the shower water flow over the incisions. Do not scrub or use soap on the incision. Allow the water to wash over the site, do not scrub and then PAT dry. Do not rub the incision(s). Place new, clean dressing or band-aid over the incision (s).
 - Shoulder: Make sure your axilla (armpit) is completely dry after showering. You may use gauze or on a dry washcloth to help keep your armpit dry.
 - Knee: Make sure the area behind your knee is completely dry after showering.

Attend Physical Therapy as directed.

HAPPY RECOVERY!