

POST-OPERATIVE ORDERS:

ANKLE SURGERY

OrthoArizona, Mezona Division
Phone (480) 964-2908

WEIGHT BEARING& BRACE: This is dependent on the procedure performed:

Ligament Repair: You will be placed in a splint in the operating room. You should keep this clean, dry and do not remove until your clinic follow-up. You will use a walker or crutches, and should be strictly non-weight bearing. You should elevate your foot to your heart level or above frequently to help reduce swelling.

Arthroscopy: Your ankle will be placed in a dressing following surgery. If there is a hard splint, the same restrictions as the Ligament Repair will apply. You will use a walker or crutches, and should be strictly non-weight bearing for one week. You will be given specific instructions for how to progress your weight bearing status at your first clinic visit. You should elevate your foot to your heart level or above frequently to help reduce swelling.

MOVING YOUR ANKLE:

If you are in a soft dressing, it is OK for you to start moving your ankle gently right away under your own power without any resistance. You will be referred for physical therapy, as this is important for full recovery. Advancement of your motion, including physical therapy, will be discussed at your first postoperative visit.

LEG EXERCISES:

You may start doing straight leg lifts right away. While lying in bed, simply keep your leg straight and lift it off of the bed. Hold it up for a count of 5. Do this 10 times, and repeat three times a day. It will be difficult at first, but don't give up, even just flexing your quad muscle without lifting your leg is helping make your leg stronger. You may start doing knee extensions at the edge of your bed as comfort allows.

ICE:

Use a commercially available ice bag or fill a large plastic bag with ice and water. (Do not place a plastic bag directly on your skin, but place a towel on your ankle in between your skin and the ice bag.) You can ice your ankle 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off throughout the day. Do not ice your leg longer than 30 minutes at a time, as this can cause frost bite. Ice is most helpful in the first 3 days after surgery, but can help up to 2 weeks after surgery. We do not recommend that you use heat, as this can increase swelling.

BANDAGES:

If you have a hard splint, keep it clean and dry and do not remove it until your clinic follow up. If you have a soft dressing, you may remove your bandages and shower three days after surgery. It is OK to get your incisions wet after the bandage is removed, but it is very important not to soak the incision

underwater (no bath, pool, hot tub etc...) for 3 weeks. It is OK to wash the incisions gently with soap and gently pat dry with a towel. Do not place any lotion or other ointment on your incisions. Put the ACE wrap back on just tight enough so that it does not fall off.

MEDICATIONS:

You will be given a narcotic pain medicine (such as Percocet – oxycodone, Norco – hydrocodone, or Tylenol#3 - Codeine). We will prescribe a different medication if you cannot take these. Take this AS NEEDED only. Do not take additional Tylenol (sometimes called acetaminophen) with these medicines, as they already have Tylenol in them. You may SUBSTITUTE Tylenol for a narcotic pill if you choose to. Be certain that you do not exceed the maximum Tylenol dose as noted on the Tylenol bottle. Pain medicines often cause constipation, so you may want to purchase an over-the-counter stool softener (for example – Dulcolax, or you may also ask the Pharmacist) to take along with these medicines. It is best to take most of these medicines with some food, as they can all cause a little stomach upset.

You may have received Phenergan (promethazine) or Zofran (ondansetron). You may take these medications if you are having nausea or vomiting.

You should take Aspirin following surgery to help prevent a blood clot. Take one full-strength pill (325 mg) twice a day. If you are unable to take Aspirin, you should take another blood thinner. Discuss this immediately with your surgeon. You should also wear the compression stockings that were placed on you following surgery.

Please do not take NSAIDs such as Ibuprofen or Motrin, as these may slow healing of bone and tendon.

FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENTS:

You should have a **follow-up appointment** with your surgeon in about 2 weeks. You will also have an additional visit with the Physician's Assistant within a few days of your surgery. Call (480) 964-2908 right away if you do not have an appointment already scheduled. We will check your incisions and remove any sutures at the 2-week visit. We will also answer any specific questions you may have about your surgery. You will be referred for Physical Therapy if this has not been arranged, as many patients benefit from PT after ankle surgery.

CALL OUR OFFICE at (480) 964-2908 with any urgent or emergent questions or concerns that you may have, or if you develop swelling in your leg with calf pain, swelling that will not go away when you elevate your leg, a temperature above 101.4, or drainage from your incisions.

If you experience any of these symptoms: go to an **Emergency Department** close to your house: High fever (above 102.5), chest pain, difficulty breathing, fainting, or bleeding.