



## **BRIELLE ORTHOPEDICS**

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### Preoperative Instructions & Information

#### *Preparation for Surgery:*

Prior to your surgery, I will answer any questions you may have regarding your procedure and recovery. Most of this discussion will take place at your preoperative visit, when we fill out all necessary surgical paperwork.

Please remember that you should not eat or drink anything after midnight on the night before your surgery. This includes coffee or drinks on the morning of your operation. If you take certain necessary medications, please discuss this with me and/or your prescribing physician prior to your surgery to see if you need to take them on the morning of the operation, or wait until after the procedure. This includes blood thinner medications such as Coumadin or Warfarin. Certain surgeries can be done safely while on blood thinner medications while other surgeries require stopping these medications. If you are on a blood thinner, please contact the physician (typically your cardiologist) who prescribes the blood thinner and ask if it would be safe for you to stop taking the blood thinner prior to surgery.

The surgery center or hospital where your surgery will take place will call you the day before your operation to let you know what time you should arrive.

On the day of the operation, please shower or bathe and take care to wash the operative area well with soap and water. This will aid in decreasing the amount of bacteria on your skin, and will help to prevent postoperative infection. Also, keep in mind that most procedures will require anesthesia, which means that you will not be able to drive yourself home from the operation.

After you arrive at the surgery location, I will meet you in the preoperative area to confirm the planned operation and to fill out the remaining paperwork. I will be happy to answer any further questions at this time, and discuss the operation with any family members who may also have questions.

Please remember that I would rather you call with any questions prior to, or after, your operation than let your questions go unanswered!

#### *Bandages & Sling:*

It is important that you understand how to care for your surgery site properly. If you have a hard splint in place, this should remain intact. If you have a sling with a strap around your waist, this should remain on except for changing clothing and hygiene. If you had shoulder surgery, you should remove your arm from the sling 3 times a day to bend and extend your elbow to avoid stiffness, keeping your arm at your side, and should also move your wrist and fingers frequently throughout the day to minimize the chance of blood clots.

Your postoperative dressing may contain either one or two layers. If instructed to remove your dressing, you may do so 4 days after your surgery. If the dressing is a clear plastic layer called Tegaderm with white fluffy gauze visible beneath, you may shower with this type of dressing the day after surgery, taking care to not disturb the adhesive on the Tegaderm. If you have an ACE wrap in place over your dressing, leave this intact and keep it dry until your first appointment, unless given specific instructions otherwise.

When you change your dressing, the incision may be covered by small white tapes called Steri-Strips. If you are instructed to change your dressing and see Steri-Strips, they should be left in place when changing the dressing. If you see stitches beneath your dressing without the white strips, you should cover these after your shower with band-aids or any other dressing of your choice to avoid getting the stitches caught and pulled.

Occasionally, there may be a small amount of blood staining your dressing, which is nothing you should worry about. However, if there is a lot of bleeding, please call the office.

### Washing & Bathing:

In general, keep the wound clean and dry for the first 4 days after surgery. Beginning on the fourth day after surgery it is safe to shower directly over the Steri-Strips or stitches. Please be gentle with the Steri-Strips. Let the soapy water run over the surgery site, but do not scrub the incision. The shower should be quick, and not too hot. Make sure to pat the wound dry with a clean towel and make sure it has dried sufficiently before placing a new dressing over the wound. Please do not soak the wound or bathe until after your stitches are removed. Avoid going in a swimming pool, lake or ocean until the stitches are removed.

You may find a yellow or orange discoloration on your skin after your surgery. This is a long lasting surgical prep used for sterilization. It is left in place because it acts to kill bacteria for hours. It will be difficult to remove with soap and water and often remains in place for days. Sometimes it can cause itching - if this is the case, try removing it with alcohol wipes first. If itching persists, take Benadryl which you can obtain at your local pharmacy without a prescription.

### Ice, Elevation & Motion:

One of the goals that you can help to achieve after surgery is to minimize swelling at the surgery site. Elevating the surgical area above the level of the heart will minimize swelling, and this should be a focus of recovery during the first 48 hours. Application of ice to the surgical site for 20 minutes at a time will also reduce swelling and pain. Keep in mind that if you have a hard splint in place, only move the fingers that are not contained within the splint.

### Physical Therapy:

Certain surgeries will require physical therapy within days of surgery. If this is the case, our office will get you set up for your first postoperative physical therapy session before your postoperative visit with me. If you see your physical therapist before you come back to my office for your postoperative visit, your therapist will remove your dressing, assess your wound, and possibly construct a custom-built splint. If this is the case, we will discuss this process before your operation.



Postoperative Complications:

If any of the following should occur, please do not hesitate to call our office at 732-840-7500.

- Increasing pain despite pain medications
- Drainage from the wound more than 2 days after your surgery
- Increasing redness, pain or swelling at the surgery site
- Fever greater than 101° which does not go down with Tylenol
- Nausea/vomiting with pain medication

Try to call during business hours in the case of a routine question or concern (8:00am - 4:00pm). For any urgent problems, the above office phone number is in service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you call after hours, the call will be routed to our answering service who will put you in touch with our “on-call” Physician Assistant. The Physician Assistant will be able to assist you, but if the Physician Assistant has any more serious concerns, the Physician on call will be contacted. Also remember that if any emergency occurs, you have the option of going to a local emergency room and/or calling 911 for immediate assistance.

***All My Best For A Healthy Recovery,***

***Michael Nakashian, MD***