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## Post-operative Instructions

1. You will have some form of dressing placed on the extremity after surgery. Bloody drainage may “seep” through your dressings. You may reinforce with additional wrap, add 4x4 sterile gauze pads under the wrap or wait until dressing changes are done in the office.
2. Keep the extremity elevated above heart level 24 to 48 hours after surgery.
3. You will experience pain after surgery. Therefore, do not hesitate to use the pain medications prescribed to you by Dr. Lavery. If pain is out of proportion to that which is normally expected, or you experience increased swelling or increased discomfort when moving your toes or fingers, please contact our office.
4. To minimize pain and speed recovery, swelling must be minimized. It is not uncommon to have a moderate increase in swelling and pain two to five days after surgery. Please call if the pain and swelling are progressively increasing.
5. An ice bag (or cryocuff, if provided) applied to the affected area 20 minutes every hour is an excellent way to control pain and swelling. If you were given a cryocuff, use it at all times for at least four days, as instructed. If you remove the cryocuff, before re-applying, always fully deflate it. Then re-apply straps with firm pressure. Re-inflate with cooled water, the jug should be elevated approximately 20 inches above knee. Re-cool water every hour while awake and every three hours during the night.
6. It is not uncommon to have mild temperature elevations after surgery, due to incomplete lung expansion. To resolve this, take 10 deep breaths and forcefully exhale every hour while awake for the first three days after surgery. You may take Tylenol to improve comfort during these temperature elevations. If the elevations are greater than 102 degrees or if you have any increase in swelling, pain, or redness, contact the office.
7. Do not remove the steri-strips (the strips over the incisions, next to your skin). You may bathe by wrapping the extremity with plastic wrap or a clean, large garbage bag. Keep the extremity dry. If the steri-strips become wet, blot them dry.
8. You may drive an automatic transmission vehicle when you have no pain and you have full control of the extremity **and** are off narcotic pain medication. If you had surgery on your right lower extremity, you should get clearance from Dr. Lavery prior to driving an automobile.
9. If pain or other problems require a hospital Emergency Department assessment, please go to Community Hospital South as OrthoIndy privileges and interactions are limited at other hospitals. The address is 1402 East County Line Road South, Indianapolis, IN 46227. The phone number is **317.887.7000**.