

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

We would like to provide you with some information that you may find helpful while planning for and recovering from your surgery with Dr. Sorensen.

MEDICATIONS

Typically, Dr. Sorensen will provide 5 prescriptions for your surgery. You may also receive an antibiotic depending on the type of surgery you are having. The number and type of medications you receive will vary depending on your individual needs and medical history. These prescriptions should provide you with enough medication until your first postoperative visit in the office. If you require additional medication before this appointment, please plan ahead as **some pain medication cannot be called into your pharmacy and will require an office visit.** We can only manage medication requests during regular office hours. If you travel a long distance to see Dr. Sorensen, be sure to obtain your medication as soon as possible after your surgery in order to begin taking it upon departing the hospital or surgery center.

Your medications may include:

- 1) A pain medication such as **Oxycodone** or **Hydrocodone**. Please remember that these medications seriously and adversely affect your judgment and response times, so drive responsibly. You should not consume alcoholic beverages while taking these types of pain medication. This prescription, like most pain medication, has a tendency to cause constipation. The best remedy for this, should it occur, is to increase fluid intake, increase activity as tolerated and increase dietary fiber by eating more fruits, vegetables and whole grain cereals, breads and bran.
- 2) A medication called **Acetaminophen** (Tylenol). This is to be taken as directed in conjunction (at the same time) with the pain medication described in #1 above. Do not take more than is directed on the bottle. This medication will work together with the narcotic (Oxycodone or Hydrocodone) to mitigate pain.
- 3) A medication called **Ibuprofen**. This is also to be taken as directed in conjunction (at the same time) with the pain medication described in #1 above. Do not take more than is directed on the bottle. This medication will work together with the narcotic (Oxycodone or Hydrocodone mentioned above in #1) to mitigate pain.
- 4) A medication called **Zofran** (Ondasteron) or **Vistaril**. This medication is an anti-nausea medicine that can be taken along with (at the same time as) your pain medication to help you relax and decrease any potential nausea. It also, works together with the pain medicine to help decrease your pain.
- 5) A medication called **Aspirin**. This medication is in effort to prevent blood clots and should be taken as directed on the bottle. Do not take more than is directed on the bottle.
- 6) An antibiotic such as **Keflex**, **Levaquin** or **Cleocin** may or may not be prescribed. If it is prescribed, it is very important that you take 100% of this medication as directed. This medication will only be prescribed if Dr. Sorensen feels it is necessary for your procedure.

Should any of these medications cause itching or hives, stop the medication and notify us so Dr. Sorensen can prescribe an alternative medication. Increasing your fluid intake will help flush the medication out of your system and get you quicker relief. You may also find Benadryl helpful in calming your reaction. Benadryl can be found at your local pharmacy without a prescription.

Another possible adverse reaction when taking new medications may be nausea and/or vomiting. Should this occur, discontinue the medication. Dr. Sorensen will prescribe an alternative medication and something to calm the nausea if necessary.

Your comfort and recovery are very important to us, Try to foresee the need for refills and pay close attention to the available quantity. Approval for refills on medications will come from Dr. Sorensen and may take up to two days for processing. We cannot take requests for medication refills on Saturdays or Sundays. Please call Maggie at:

Pain and Swelling

Your foot/ankle may be numb and painless for as long as 72 hours after your surgery. This is due to the local anesthesia used during your surgery. Most will notice this wearing off after the first 12-18 hours. When this happens, you will start to experience normal postoperative pain. It is important that you not wait for the pain to become unbearable before taking your pain medication. By doing so, it will greatly affect your ability to obtain timely pain relief. Use your pain medication generously in the first week after surgery. You may experience swelling or a feeling of tightness and throbbing when your foot is resting on the ground. Elevating your feet at the level of your chest with one pillow can help relieve this.

For all surgical procedures it is important to apply ice. The most efficient spot to ice is **behind the knee** of the operative foot or ankle. All the blood vessels that go to the foot or ankle come right behind the knee first. It is efficient and effective to cool the blood before it gets down to the foot or ankle. 20min. per hour, **during the daytime only**, of ice behind the knee is the maximum amount of time it should be applied.

Surgical Dressing

After surgery, we use a variety of techniques to immobilize your foot and ankle to assist in your recovery. Dr. Sorensen will apply a surgical soft cast or splint immediately after your surgery. This is used to cradle and support the limb and to absorb any bleeding that may occur. Special controlled environments are required for optimal healing. Keep your dressing dry and intact until your first office appointment. **If your dressing becomes wet, you will need to be seen that day or the following morning to have it changed.** You may notice some bloody spotting or drainage on your dressing which is normal. The purpose of the dressing is to provide compression and absorb any drainage from the surgical incision. Please call the office if the size of the spotting enlarges rapidly.

You may shower as long as you don't get your dressing wet. Sponge bathing is recommended until your first office visit. If you decide to shower before your dressing is removed use the shower bag you purchased at the office to keep the splint dry. These are available for purchase at the OrthoIllinois office.

Activity

You should not put any weight on the operative foot/ankle until Dr. Sorensen has given approval. If surgery was on your right foot/ankle or if you drive a standard vehicle, you should not drive until also cleared by Dr. Sorensen.

Questions or Concerns

We encourage you to call the office with any questions or concerns throughout your recovery from surgery. If you experience any of the following symptoms, please call to discuss these symptoms with Dr. Sorensen's staff.

- High fever (greater than 101 degrees) and chills
- Uncontrollable bleeding
- Inability to urinate for more than 8 hours
- Sudden shortness of breath, chest pain or coughing up blood
- Sudden color changes to your toes or if your toes turn white
- Foul odor coming from your dressing
- Severe onset of pain not controlled by pain medication

You can reach our office during regular office hours Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:00pm for general questions or to discuss postoperative concerns. Dr. Sorensen's patient coordinator is Maggie and is usually in the office Mon.-Fri 8 A.M-4 P.M but is also in clinic daily and will check messages and return calls in a timely manner. If you have questions or need medical attention or have a medical emergency outside of regular office hours you can reach Dr. Sorensen any time on his cell phone at: **608-738-6026**. Dr. Sorensen's cell phone should be saved for emergent situations only.

Below are the direct extensions for our staff that you may need during your pre-surgery and recovery period.

Maggie Schumacher..... **815-398-9491**
Appointment Scheduling **779-800-5320**