

## **After Your Orthopedic Surgery**

### *Self-care at home*

*This handout gives instructions about your wound care, diet, and signs to watch for after you are home. Please talk with a member of your healthcare team if you have any questions.*

### **Self-care at Home**

#### **Incision Care**

- Keep your bandage and incision clean and dry.
- Your surgeon will tell you when you can remove your bandage. After you remove it, check your incision every day. Make sure that:
  - Wound edges are closed
  - There is no drainage, warmth, redness, or tenderness
- If you have any concerns about your incision, please call one of the numbers listed under “Who to Call” on page 2.

#### **Diet**

Eat a well-balanced diet. Include foods from all food groups: proteins, vegetables, fruits, and grains. Protein is very important in helping your wound heal. Good protein sources are:

- Meat, fish, poultry, dairy products, eggs
- Beans, lentils, tofu, peanuts, other legumes

#### **Activity and Exercise**

Please follow the directions your provider gave you about exercises and activities that you can do while recovering from surgery.

#### **Pain Control**

Please read the handout you received at your pre-surgery clinic visit about controlling your pain at home.

#### **Follow-up Clinic Visit**

You will have a follow-up clinic visit 7 to 14 days after your surgery.



*At your follow-up visit, your surgeon will check your progress.*

At your follow-up visit, your surgeon will:

- Check on your recovery
- Remove your staples or *sutures* (stitches)

## Showering

- **After your staples or sutures are removed at your follow-up visit**, you may shower with your incision uncovered, unless your provider tells you otherwise.
- For **4 to 6 weeks** after your surgery, do **not** take a bath, sit in a hot tub, go swimming, or soak your incision in water, unless your provider tells you it is OK.

## When to Call

Call your provider or clinic if you have:

- Fever higher than 101°F (38.3°C)
- Changes in your incision:
  - Opening
  - Drainage
  - Warmth, redness, or tenderness
- Numbness, tingling, or other problems in your surgical arm or leg
- Increased pain that is not eased by pain medicine
- Any symptom that causes you concern

### Call 911 right away if you have:

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath

## Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

UW Medicine Sports Medicine Center: Call 206.598.DAWG (3294) and press 2.

## Who to Call

If you have any questions or concerns about your recovery, call one of these numbers:

- **Weekdays from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.:** Call 206.598.DAWG (3294). When you hear the recording, press 2.
- **After hours and on holidays and weekends:** Call 206.598.6190 and ask for the Orthopedic Resident on call to be paged. If you do not hear back from a provider within 15 to 20 minutes, please call again. Tell the operator that you have not yet received a call back.