After Your Orthopaedic Surgery

Self-care at home

This handout gives information about your diet, hygiene, wound care, and signs to watch for after you are home. Please talk with your nurse or doctor about any questions you have.

When to Call Your Doctor or Clinic

Call your doctor if you have:

- Fever higher than 101°F (38.3°C)
- Changes in your incision:
  - Opening
  - Drainage
  - Redness or tenderness
- Numbness, tingling, or loss of function of your arm or leg
- Increased pain that is not eased by pain medicine
- Any symptom you do not fully understand

When to Call 9-1-1

Call 9-1-1 right away if you have:

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath

Incision Care

Check your incision each day and make sure that:

- Wound edges are closed
- There is no drainage, redness, or tenderness

Your surgeon will remove your staples or sutures (stitches) at your first follow-up clinic visit, unless they are removed before you leave the hospital.
After your staples or sutures are removed:

- You may shower with your incision uncovered.
- Do not soak your incision in water (as in a bathtub, hot tub, or swimming pool) for 4 to 6 weeks after your surgery, unless your doctor has told you it is OK.

**Diet**

Diet Eat a well-balanced diet. Include foods from all food groups: fruits and vegetables, grains (pasta, cereal, bread, rice), and proteins.

**Protein**

Protein is especially important in helping your wound heal. Good protein sources are:

- Meat, fish, and poultry
- Dairy products and eggs
- Legumes (beans, lentils)

**Preventing Constipation**

Preventing Constipation You may become constipated because of your pain medicines, iron supplement, and reduced activity. To prevent constipation:

- Drink at least 6 glasses of water a day.
- Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains (such as brown rice, steel-cut oats, quinoa, or bulgur wheat), and bran.

Please ask your nurse for the handout “Constipation After Your Operation” for more tips on preventing and treating constipation.

**If You Have an Artificial Joint**

If you have had an artificial joint placed, remember to tell your dentist and other health care providers. To prevent infection in your artificial joint, you may need antibiotics before you have any dental work or surgery.

**Special Instructions**

_____________________________________________________________________________________________
Who to Call

If you have any questions or concerns, please call one of these numbers:

**Bone and Joint Surgery Center (Orthopaedic Clinic)**
Weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. .............................. 206-598-4288

**Orthopaedic Resident on call**
After hours and on holidays and weekends ............... 206-598-6190

**6 Southeast Nursing Unit**
24 hours a day ..................................................... 206-598-4410

**Occupational Therapy**
Weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.............................. 206-598-4840

**Physical Therapy**
Weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.............................. 206-598-4828

**Sports Medicine Clinic at Husky Stadium**
Daily hours vary .................................................. 206-520-5000

**Roosevelt Exercise Training Center**
Daily hours vary .................................................. 206-598-2888

Questions?

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

Orthopaedics/Bone and Joint Surgery Center:
206-598-4288