



Mammoth Orthopedic Institute • 85 Sierra Park Road • Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546 • 760.924.4084
www.mammothortho.com

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: DISTAL FIBULA FRACTURE WITH SYNDESMOSESIS

ACTIVITY

- **Do not bear weight on the operative leg until permitted by Dr. Knecht.** This is usually 8-12 weeks to protect the syndesmosis fixation. Please use crutches or ambulation device to assist with walking.
- Do not engage in prolonged periods of standing or walking the first 7-10 days following surgery.
- Avoid long periods of sitting (without leg elevated) or long distance traveling for 2 weeks.
- You may move your hip and knee as much as you would like.
- Use boot day and night for immobilization but come out of boot 3 times a day for gentle ankle range of motion and icing.

Dressings:

- You may leave your operative dressing ON until your first post operative visit at about 10-14 days from surgery as long as it remains clean and dry. If dressings become wet or soiled, dressings with sterile gauze or call the clinic.
- If you are going to shower, please protect the boot and dressing with a garbage bag, saran wrap, etc in order to keep it dry. We recommend a sponge bath initially, particularly because it is hard to stand on one leg in the shower especially if you are on narcotic pain medications.
- We will remove sutures/staples at your first visit and redress the wound.

PAIN & INFLAMMATION

- **Ice** - Apply an ice bag wrapped in a dry towel several times per day for 20 minutes for the first week and then as needed for pain relief and inflammation.
- **Compression** - Use your ACE wrap to decrease swelling. Always wrap from your foot towards your thigh.
- **Elevation** - Keep your foot **elevated above your heart** as much as possible for the first 3 to 4 days.
- **Pain Medication**
 - You have been given a prescription for pain control; please take as directed.
If you think you will require a refill on your medication, you **MUST** do so during our regular **weekday** office hours.
If you need additional pain medication you may take Tylenol 500-650mg every 4-6 hours. **Do not take more than 3grams or 3000mg in a 24 hour period!**
Common side effects of the pain medication are:
NAUSEA: To decrease nausea, take these medications with food.
DROWSINESS: Do not drive a car or operate machinery.
ITCHING: You may take Benadryl to alleviate any itching.
CONSTIPATION: To decrease constipation, use the stool softener provided (Docusate 250mg) or over-the-counter remedies (Milk of Magnesia, Miralax, etc).
Also avoid bananas, rice, apples, toast, or yogurt...as these foods can make you constipated. Getting up and moving around also helps with constipation by "waking up" your intestinal tract.
- Please ask if you can take Anti-inflammatory medications (Aleve, Ibuprofen, Naproxen, etc.)

EMERGENCIES

- Please have someone stay with you for the first 24 hours after surgery
- Please call the clinic or the orthopedist on-call if:
 - Drainage soaks the dressings, expands, is foul-smelling, or your incisions are red, warm, and extremely painful

- You develop a fever ($>101.5^{\circ}$) or chills
- You experience leg or calf pain, leg swelling, or difficulty breathing
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FOLLOW-UP CARE

• Please **schedule a follow-up visit** for suture removal, x-rays, and to review your surgery 10-14 days postoperatively.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE CALL
Mammoth 760-924-4084
Bishop 760-872-7766

EXERCISES – When you are comfortable and ready you may perform each exercise 2-3 times a day; it may help to take pain medication 20-30 minutes prior to the exercises and to apply ice after the exercises

Quadriceps Contractions:

Sit or lie on the floor with your operated leg straight
 Place a towel roll under the knee
 Tighten your thigh and hamstring muscles, causing you to press
 your knee downward into the towel roll
 Hold this position for 10 seconds
 Relax your thigh and hamstring muscles
 Perform 2-3 sets of 10

Straight Leg Raises:

Lie on the floor
 Perform a quadriceps contraction (as stated
 in the above exercise)
 Raise your foot about 6-12" off the floor
 Slowly lower your leg back to the floor
 Relax your thigh muscle
 Perform 2-3 sets of 10

