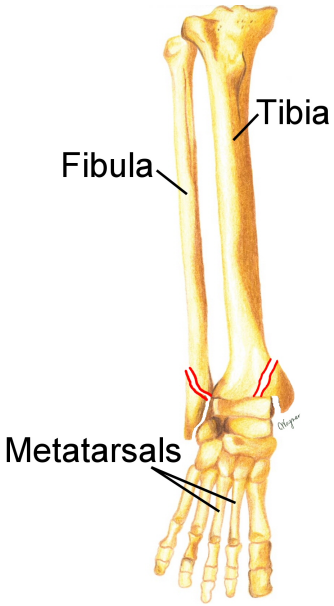
Trimalleolar Fracture, Ankle, Adult, Displaced (ORIF), Care After Surgery

Please read the instructions outlined below. Refer to these instructions for the next few weeks. These discharge instructions provide you with general information on caring for yourself after surgery. Your surgeon may also give you specific instructions. While your treatment has been planned according to the most current medical practices available, unavoidable complications occasionally occur. If you have any problems or questions after discharge, please call your surgeon.



HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING SURGERY

- You may resume normal diet and activities as directed or allowed.
- Keep ice packs (a bag of ice wrapped in a towel) on the surgical area for 20 minutes, 4 times per day, for the first two days following surgery. Use the ice only if OK with your surgeon or caregiver.
- Change dressings if necessary or as directed.
- If you have a plaster or fiberglass ***cast***:
  - Do not try to scratch the skin under the cast using sharp or pointed objects.
  - Check the skin around the cast every day. You may put lotion on any red or sore areas.
  - Keep your cast dry and clean.
- **Do not** put pressure on any part of your cast or splint until it is fully hardened.
- Your cast or splint can be protected during bathing with a plastic bag. Do not lower the cast or splint into water.
- Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.
- Use crutches as directed and do not exercise leg unless instructed.
- **These are not fractures to be taken lightly! If these bones become displaced and get out of position, it may eventually lead to arthritis and disability for the rest of your life. Problems often follow even the best of care. Follow the directions of your surgeon.**
- Keep appointments as directed.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF YOU DEVELOP:

- Redness, swelling, or increasing pain in the wound.
- Pus coming from wound.
- An unexplained oral temperature above 101° F (38.3° C) develops.
- A bad *(foul)* smell coming from the wound or dressing.
- A breaking open of the wound (edges not staying together) after sutures or staples have been removed.

If you do not have a window in your cast for observing the wound, a discharge or minor bleeding may show up as a stain on the outside of your cast. Report these findings to your surgeon.

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