Bimalleolar Fracture, Ankle, Adult, Displaced (ORIF), Care after Surgery

Read the instructions outlined below and refer to this sheet in the next few weeks. These discharge instructions provide you with general information on caring for yourself after you leave the hospital. Your doctor 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 caregiver.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS FOLLOWING SURGERY

- You may resume normal diet and activities as directed or allowed. Use crutches as instructed.
- Keep *ice packs* (a bag of ice wrapped in a towel) on the surgical area for fifteen minutes, four 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 splint or ***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 or splint 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.
- Take prescribed medication as directed. 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 the fracture displaces and gets 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 all instructions** given to you by your caregiver, make and keep follow up appointments.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF YOU HAVE:

- Redness, swelling, numbness or increasing pain in the wound.
- Pus coming from wound.
- An unexplained oral temperature above 102º F (38.9º C) develops.
- A bad smell coming from the wound or dressing.
- A breaking open of the *wound* (edges not staying together) after stitches 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 immediately after surgery. Report these findings to your caregiver.

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