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Dr. Lowry's Post-Op Instructions Retrograde Intramedullary Nail for Distal Femur Fracture

Patient:

1. You will likely require discharge to an inpatient rehab or skilled nursing facility. There are many options locally from which to choose. Your case manager (social worker) will work with you & your family to find the best location to meet all your needs.
2. To decrease the risk of a blood clot, you will be given compression stockings & prescribed a daily aspirin; both are to be used for four weeks. If you are at higher risk of a blood clot, then you will be given an injectable of either Arixtra SQ or Lovenox SQ x 4-6wks.
3. To improve your bone strength, you will be prescribed Vitamin D & Calcium supplements for a minimum of 3 months. Take as prescribed.
4. There will be no sutures to remove once the wound has healed (generally 2 weeks).
5. Dressings: You have one incision at the front of your hip & several about your knee. Please remove the ace wraps in 48 hours & shower only (no bathing), immediately dab your incisions dry, apply a thin layer of Neosporin (or other topical antibiotic ointment), place a new bandage (island dressings or sterile 4x4s with tegaderm or paper tape) & replace the ace wrap up to the thigh. Again, no bathing for 4 wks after surgery.
6. You will also have a "polar care" placed over your dressings. This is a device that circulates cold water around the knee to keep down the initial swelling after surgery. Wear x 48 hrs while you have your initial dressings on. Then, use it 2-3x/day x 45 mins each use. ALWAYS have your knee covered. Do not place the polar care directly on your skin as it may cause skin damage. (Use two properly sealed ice packs to your knee in the same manner if you are not given one a polar care device.)
7. You will have a knee brace that keeps your knee straight. You need to use this for at least three weeks, especially at night when sleeping. Only remove it for hygiene & during therapy sessions for knee ROM.
8. Use your walker at all times & do not put any significant weight on your foot for at least 6 weeks: Toe-Touch Weight-Bearing on your leg for a minimum of 6 weeks. You will hurt the repair by walking on your leg too soon. **[PT instructions: TDWB w/ walker x 6wks; gait & transfer training; work on AROM of knee only – no PROM until 6 wks]**
9. Please make an appointment to see me in 14 days after your surgery.

If you have any other questions or concerns please call my clinic.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jason K. Lowry, MD FAAOS