

## TOTAL JOINT REPLACEMENT POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

- **Follow-Up Appointment:**
  - *You should already be scheduled for a 2-week follow-up appointment, but if you are unsure about your follow-up date, please call our office at (804) 288-1802 ext 11073.*
  - *If you do not have this appointment, it should be scheduled 2 weeks from the date of your surgery*
  
- **Activity:**
  - *Unless you have been specifically instructed otherwise, you can advance your activity as tolerated.*
  - *You have no hip precautions. Be sure any physical therapist who is working with you understands this and encourage them to call my office with any questions.*
  - *You may also bear weight fully on your hip with a walker and transition to a cane or crutch as soon as you feel comfortable and strong enough. That being said, advance your activity in a stepwise and cautious manner. You will likely feel better than your hip is ready for.*
  - *Please refrain from any high level activities until we see you back at your follow up appointment. This includes golfing, exercising, and other more intense activities.*
  - *Perform your exercises as often as possible, at least 2 times a day.*
  - *Application of the ice packs will prevent and treat inflammation and reduce pain and swelling. You should ice the incisional area at least 3 times a day, 20-30 minutes at a time.*
  
- **Dressings / Wound Care:**
  - *Your waterproof dressing should be removed between 7-10 days from surgery. You can do this yourself or your home therapy personnel can do it for you.*
  - *Dermabond (skin glue) may be used to help close the incision, which appears as a thin, transparent covering over the incision. Do not pick or pull at this covering, this will fall off naturally within 2-3 weeks.*
  - *Do not apply antibiotic ointment to your incisions.*

*If you have questions or concerns, please call Dr. Robertson's staff*

- **Once your waterproof dressing has been removed, you may change bandages daily if you like or leave open to air. These can be purchased at your local pharmacy.**
- **Most incisions are closed with absorbable sutures but if not the sutures or staples will be removed at your 2 week follow up.**
- **Showering / Bathing:**
  - **If your incision is dry without drainage you may shower following your discharge home. The dressing is waterproof as long as well affixed to skin.**
  - **You may shower with the waterproof dressing in place, but dry dressings should be removed before showering.**
  - **It is fine to have water run over the incision after the waterproof dressing has been removed.**
  - **Do not vigorously scrub your incision.**
  - **Do not take a bath or get into a swimming pool / Jacuzzi until you follow up with Dr. Robertson.**
  - **Do not soak your incision under water for 6 weeks.**
  - **If there is continued drainage or you are concerned contact Dr. Robertson's office prior to showering (804) 288-1802 ext. 11073**
- **Diet:**
  - **You may advance to your regular diet as tolerated.**
  - **Proper nutrition is crucial to healing. Make sure you are eating as healthy as possible and following a balanced diet after your surgery.**
  - **Avoid processed foods and eat mainly fruits and vegetables.**
- **Medications:**
  - **It is our goal to keep you as comfortable as possible after your surgery. Please take your medications as prescribed without exceeding the recommended dosage.**
  - **It is also important to understand that pain has a cycle. It begins and increases until medication interrupts it. The aim of good pain control is to stop the pain before it becomes intolerable. The key is to stay ahead of the pain.**
  - **We encourage patients to discontinue pain medications as soon as possible after surgery.**

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- ***The side effects of these medications can be substantial and the narcotic medications are not mandatory. You may substitute a prescribed narcotic with over-the-counter Tylenol.***
- ***We along with your narcotic will likely give you two other pain medications Celebrex and tramadol.***
- ***Pain medications may cause constipation- Colace twice daily and Miralax while taking the narcotic medication should help prevent constipation.***
- ***Other possible side effects of pain medication include dizziness, headache, nausea, vomiting, and urinary retention.***
- ***Discontinue the pain medication if you develop itching, rash, shortness of breath, or difficulties swallowing. If these symptoms become severe or are not relieved by discontinuing the medication, you should seek immediate medical attention.***
- ***Refills of pain medication are authorized during office hours only (8 AM- 5 PM Monday through Friday). Our office will not prescribe narcotics beyond 6 weeks from the date of your surgery.***
- ***Narcotics will not be called into the pharmacy and, in most cases, you must be seen clinically.***
  
- ***Blood Thinner:***
  - ***You will be given a prescription for either Aspirin or Xarelto based on your health history.***
  - ***You should take these medications as prescribed for 30 days following your surgery and then an 81mg for 2 additional months if you don't already take one.***
  
- ***Driving:***
  - ***You should not return to driving until you are off all narcotic pain medications and able to safely and quickly apply the brakes. This is normally 2-4 weeks for left sided joint replacements and 2-6 weeks for right-sided joint replacements.***
  
- ***Airports and metal detectors***
  - ***ID cards used to be routinely given after joint replacement, however they do not save you any time and aren't helpful to TSA or security. Most joint replacements do not set off metal detectors. If the detector is set off, just tell the security officer you have a joint replacement.***

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- **Signs/Symptoms of Concern: Contact Dr. Robertson's office if any of the following signs or symptoms develop. Please be advised if a problem arises which you feel requires immediate medical attention you should seek medical attention at the closest ER.**
  - **Temperature greater than 101.5 for more than 8 hrs**
  - **Fever and/or chills that persist for greater than 8 hr.**
  - **A sudden increase in pain/swelling/ or tenderness in the back of your calf or thigh that isn't relieved with ice/elevation and pain medication.**
  - **Increased drainage from your incision, increased redness or warmth at the area of your incision or a sudden increase in swelling or redness that persists despite ice and elevation**
  
- **Feedback**
  - **I want to provide the very best care for you. Feel free to email me comments and suggestions on how I can improve the experience for you and future patients. I will be here with you every step of the way. It is my privilege to be your surgeon.**

**Email: [Ryan.Robertson@orthovirginia.com](mailto:Ryan.Robertson@orthovirginia.com) or Website: [RyanRobertsonMD.com](http://RyanRobertsonMD.com)**

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**Phone (804) 288-1802 ext. 11073 Fax (804) 968-1816**