

Patient information – General Trauma

Unfortunately, you had an injury requiring surgery. I will guide you through the process.

Please make sure not to eat or drink anything the midnight before your surgery. Since you will be going home following your surgery, you will need to make arrangements to be picked up from the hospital by your friends or family.

Following surgery, you will have a soft partial cast. Please keep everything clean and dry. Please do not manipulate dressings/casts unless specifically instructed to do so. If the dressing or cast gets wet, you will need to make arrangements to see me sooner at the Fracture Clinic to have that addressed. Otherwise, I will typically see you in 2-3 weeks following the surgery to take out sutures and change dressings/cast. Follow-up appointment will be at the Fracture clinic at the hospital.

While incision is still healing, please do not put polysporin or any lotions / creams unless instructed to do so.

After surgery, you will likely be asked to "non-weight-bear" for 6-8 weeks. Meaning, you cannot put any pressure on your leg or arm depending on the affected limb. You may want to get a walker/crutches or knee-scooter to assist with ambulation. However, some patients may be allowed to put full weight right away. Please follow instructions provided by the nurses/physiotherapists upon discharge home.

Keep your arm/leg elevated while sitting or lying down. That will help with swelling and pain. Generally, swelling is very common following any surgery. It could take several months or longer for the swelling to go away.

You will be provided with a prescription for analgesia following your surgery. Use it as a breakthrough for pain only if needed. Try using other modes of analgesia as well (i.e., Tylenol). Intermittent use of ice packs (15 min on/off, not in direct contact with the skin) would also be helpful.

Few more things to keep in mind:

- Following surgery, you may feel a bit of numbness, tingling, or sensitivity of the skin around the foot or ankle. Typically, this is common, and related to swelling and surgery. This will improve with movement and use after the cast comes off.
- We use a pink-coloured cleaning solution during the surgery to clean your foot. Some of it may still be visible on your skin. That's normal. However, it is not normal for redness to spread up the leg, and needs to be assessed.

Please note that it takes time for tissues to heal. It is helpful to:

- Supplement your diet with Calcium and Vitamin D
- Avoid smoking
- Patients with Diabetes should pay particular attention to sugar control

2-3 weeks after your surgery, initial cast and dressings will be removed. Depending on your surgery, you will be placed into a cast, an air cast or a brace. Weight-bearing restrictions will be clarified at your follow-up visit. They may change from your initial instructions.

You will have a second follow-up visit around 6-8 weeks following your surgery. If necessary, new xrays will be obtained at that point, and your weightbearing status may be changed at that point.

Once the incision is fully healed (typically, 4-5 weeks after surgery), it would be helpful to massage the scar 2-3 times per day. It will help to reduce pain and swelling.

Most patients will require physiotherapy once the cast / brace is removed. I will clarify the timing for therapy depending on the type of your injury.

If you have any other questions, please contact my office at 416-479-1623 or fracture clinic at 416-469-6384.