



EmergeOrtho
Blue Ridge Region

**Dr. Hedrick's
Post-Operative Instructions**

1. Keep your foot elevated as much as possible for the first week. Elevate it enough that gravity will pull fluid down out of the foot.
2. Do not remove or change your dressing unless directed to do so by Dr. Hedrick. It is okay if there is a small amount of blood on the bandage. If the dressing becomes saturated, call our office to schedule a dressing change or reinforce it at home by adding gauze to the outside of your dressing.
3. Contact the office if you have a temperature above 101° F, shortness of breath, or tongue swelling.
4. If you received prescription medication, take it only as directed. Take pain medication with food to reduce the chance of nausea.
5. After surgery, begin with a light meal or crackers. Advance to a normal diet as tolerated.
6. If you have a cam boot, keep this on at all times. If you have a post-op shoe, check your instructions to see if you can remove it when resting.
7. Do not get your dressing wet, since this can cause wound healing problems. Bathing options are a sponge bath, a regular bath while keeping the operative extremity elevated and covered, or a shower while keeping the operative extremity covered and dry. Showering will generally be more comfortable and safer if you use a chair or stool to sit on. Sitting while showering is very important if you have weight restrictions on your operative extremity. If you do not have a usable stool or chair at home, you can ask for a prescription for a shower stool. Options for covering your operative extremity include a cast cover (available online or at a pharmacy) or using garbage bags and duct tape in a double layer.
8. Make sure all your toes are pink and warm. Some numbness can be normal due to swelling or if you had a nerve block pre-operatively.
9. We do not prescribe blood thinners for most foot and ankle surgeries. You may take aspirin, if desired, and may move the non-operative leg for motion exercises. If you have a history of a blood clot in your leg (DVT) or lungs (PE), make sure you inform our office.
10. Your follow-up appointment is typically 10-14 days after surgery. Appointment information should be written on the instructions you receive from the hospital or surgery center. If not, call our office at 828-258-8800.

11. Expect to have pain after surgery. Take your prescribed pain medication as directed. If you can tolerate anti-inflammatories such as ibuprofen, you may take them in addition to the prescribed medication. Do not take additional Tylenol. Elevate your foot as much as possible. The pain will usually be worst when your block wears off and should slowly improve with time. We do not prescribe narcotics after hours or on weekends. If you have concerns about pain, call our office during business hours (Monday-Friday, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM).
12. Answers to other surgery-related questions can be found on Dr. Hedrick's website [here](#). If your questions are not answered there, call our office at 828-258-8800 during business hours.