

## Discharge Instructions Following Orthopedic Surgery Total Knee Replacement / Total Hip Replacement

### 1. DAY OF SURGERY (24 hours)

#### Effects of Anesthesia

The effects of the drugs that you were given during or after your surgery can last for up to 24 hours. The side effects of these drugs can alter your short-term memory, judgement, motor skills and response time.

Have a responsible adult take you home and remain with you for the rest of the day and overnight.

#### In the 24 hours after your surgery, do not:

- Drink any alcohol
- Take any pills that will make you feel sleepy. Check with your doctor if you are unsure.
- Drive a car, use machinery, power tools or appliances
- Make major decisions or sign legal papers.

### 2. DIET

- You may feel some nausea. Eat and drink whatever you can tolerate.
- Resume your usual diet when you feel ready.
- Avoid alcohol while taking pain medications.
- Avoid constipation by increasing fiber in your diet (fruits, vegetables, whole grains and cereals)
- Drink 6-8 glasses of water each day.

### 3. HYGIENE

- You may shower or sponge bath at any time.
- Avoid hot tubs, and swimming until the incision has healed
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. PAIN

- Pain and swelling are an expected part of surgery and does not necessarily indicate a problem. Try elevating the leg, using ice or cold compressive therapy, and taking medication as prescribed by your surgeon.
- Patients with concerns are to contact are to contact the surgeon's office during office hours. If they have an after-hours concern such as fever, increased redness and warmth around the incision or drainage from the incision, they are to go to the emergency department.
- **Nerve Block Catheter:** please refer to "How to care and what to expect from your Nerve Block Catheter and Medication Pump" handout provided to you.

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### 5. FOLLOW UP

#### a. Wound Care

- Please ensure that you have your waterproof, breathable dressing prior to discharge.

##### **Knees**

- *Remove bulky dressing the day after surgery. Have a shower and pat your incision dry with a clean, dry towel. Apply the waterproof, breathable dressing that was provided to you by your nurse.*
- Keep the waterproof, breathable dressing on for 7 days. On day 7 remove the dressing.
- On day 7, if there is no further fresh discharge, leave wound open to the air.
- Only reapply the provided waterproof, breathable dressing if the incision has further fresh discharge. Leave this dressing on for an additional 7 days.

#### b. Suture/Staple Removal

- Will be done at your surgeon's follow up appointment 2 weeks after your surgery (including telemedicine appointments).
- Make sure you have this appointment booked as directed.
- If you have not been contacted with your follow up appointment date and time, call (807) 684-6363 to inquire.

#### c. Physiotherapy

- All **KNEE** replacement patients should begin their outpatient therapy within 7 days of leaving the hospital.
- All **HIP** replacement patients (excluding anterior approach) need to arrange physiotherapy appointments within 2-3 weeks of discharge from hospital.
- Your physiotherapy requisition will be provided. You are responsible to book your own physiotherapy appointment. Bring your physiotherapy requisition with you.
- Please ensure that you are performing all of the recommended exercises as prescribed by your surgeon and therapist. Refer to the patient education booklet you have been provided or to your SeamLess MD account.
- The patient education booklet and other videos to support you can be found at [www.rjac.ca](http://www.rjac.ca)
- Other excellent resources can be found on the Canadian Orthopaedic Foundation website: <http://whenithurtstomove.org/ways-to-give-get-involved/patient-information-resources/>

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### **d. Medications**

- Start your anticoagulant the day after your surgery, unless told otherwise by your doctor.
- Follow pain prescriptions as prescribed by your doctor.

### **e. Self Monitoring**

- Call your doctor if you have the following:
  - ✓ Chills or fever over 38°C or 101°F by mouth
  - ✓ Increased bleeding, swelling, tenderness, redness, or foul odour from your incision
  - ✓ Vomiting that does not go away
  - ✓ Trouble or burning when passing urine
  - ✓ Increased pain not relieved by pain pills
  - ✓ Severe headache
- Call 911 or go to the nearest Emergency Department if you have the following:
  - ✓ Severe chest pain, or shortness of breath
  - ✓ Pain, swelling, or redness of your legs

Did your doctor tell you that you have developed an infection related to your surgery?

If YES, please call the LWDH Infection Prevention Control office (807) 468-9861 extension 2362.

*Thank you for helping us ensure quality care.*