

CMG – Orthopedic Surgery

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You have undergone Achilles tendon repair. Following these guidelines should give you the best chance for a quick recovery.

Diet:

Advance to solid food as tolerated.

Bandages:

Leave your cast or splint on until you follow up in the office in 7-10 days. If you flew in from out of town for surgery, your cast may be removed by your athletic trainer/physical therapist.

Bathing/Shower:

You should keep the surgical site dry until your incision is fully healed. This generally takes 7-10 days. For the first 7-10 days after surgery, you will be in a cast or splint, which you will need to keep dry. During this time, you should consider sponge bathing or taking a bath. Once the incision is fully healed, as determined by Dr. Kerns, you may get your incision wet in the shower, but you should avoid submerging under water until you are four weeks out of surgery.

Activity:

You will leave the surgery center with a cast or splint on the leg. This should be left intact and should be left clean and dry. You may **not** put *any* weight on the leg until you are told otherwise; therefore, you will require crutches. Generally, it is a good idea to undergo crutch training prior to your surgical date.

It is advisable to get up and “move around” as much as you can tolerate after surgery, as doing so helps prevent blood clots. However, whenever you are not specifically up moving around, it is important to elevate your leg. Try to keep the foot above the heart level. It is also very important to avoid pressure directly on your heel, as prolonged periods of pressure on the heel can lead to ulcers. The best way to elevate the leg without putting direct pressure on the heel or the Achilles incision site is by placing pillows under the calf area, allowing the heel and the incision area to “float”. You should try to place the pillows over a broad area of the calf, higher than the Achilles area, under the muscular part of the calf - not the Achilles area.

You may require pain medication for 7-10 days after surgery. Please do not drive after taking pain medication. Plan to have a family member or friend assist with transportation.

When the splint or cast comes off, you will be placed in a cam walker (boot). This will generally stay on until you are approximately eight weeks out of surgery.

Medications:

Many patients elect to have a “block” prior to surgery to help with postoperative pain relief. This block provide significant pain relief in the early postoperative period, but it will wear off 12-24 hours after surgery. Your leg will likely feel weak for the duration of the nerve block.

You will be prescribed narcotic pain medication to help with pain control that you might experience after the block wears off. It is very important to “stay ahead” of the pain by taking the medication prior to the onset of pain. In other words, **do not wait until you hurt to take your pain medication.** We generally recommend taking your pain medication approximately every six hours during the first 24 hours after surgery. One good strategy is to take the medication about an hour prior to going to bed and plan to take it six hours prior to that time as well.

Pain medicine can cause nausea, so take the medication with food. You may be given a prescription to help with nausea. You do not need to fill this prescription, but you should keep handy in the event that you need it.

EMERGENCIES

Contact Dr. Kerns' Office at 989-583-7450 if any of the following are present:

- Painful swelling or numbness
- Unrelenting pain
- Fever (over 101° - it is normal to have a low grade fever for the first day or twofollowing surgery) or chills
- Redness around incisions
- Color change in extremities
- Continuous drainage or bleeding from incision (a small amount of drainage is expected)
- Difficulty breathing
- Excessive nausea/vomiting

**If you have an emergency after office hours or on the weekend, contact the main office number at 989-583-7450, you will be connected to our on call Nurse they can then contact the Doctor on Call if warranted. DO NOT call the hospital or surgicenter.

**If you have an emergency that requires immediate attention, proceed to the nearest emergency room.

Postoperative Office Visit:

Please call for an appointment 7 to 10 days after your surgery at 989-583-7450 if one is not already scheduled for you.