

# OrthoNeuro

Nicholas A. Cheney, DO  
Standard Post-Operative Recovery

Ankle fracture with high ankle ligament injury:

- This is an outpatient procedure, meaning you will most likely go home after surgery.
- You will be in a splint or boot after surgery for the first 2 weeks. Follow the discharge instructions given to you after surgery.
- At your 2-week follow up appointment, you will have your splint removed and sutures/staples removed. Xrays will be taken as well.
- You will be placed into a boot and begin working on ankle range of motion. You may also get your wound wet as long as it is healed. **You are not to put any weight on the operative ankle yet.**
- You will follow up 4 or 6 weeks later (6-8 weeks after surgery) for xrays to assess healing and check swelling and range of motion. Normally, the bones are healed by now. Now we wait for the ligaments to heal, which usually takes 12 weeks.
- If screws were used, it will be discussed whether it is felt necessary to remove them or not. If no screws were used, then more than likely you will be able to begin walking **IN THE BOOT ONLY** after this visit
- You will follow up 4 weeks later for repeat Xrays to assess stability. If everything looks good at that visit, you will begin aggressive physical therapy.
- After 6 weeks of aggressive physical therapy, you will return to be evaluated. If you have made sufficient progress you will be released, however, if it is felt that you would benefit from more therapy, a new script will be given and you will follow up after completing the therapy.

\*\* Please note that any foot and ankle surgery causes significant swelling/pain. The foot/ankle are the most dependant parts of the body and this leaves no place for the swelling to go unless you elevate the foot/ankle. The majority of your pain after surgery will be due to swelling. The more you elevate your foot, the less pain you should have. The analogy I like to use is that swelling is water and if you pour water on the top of a hill it runs down the hill. Your body is basically pouring water into your foot/ankle and you need to elevate your foot so it runs down hill. The only way to do this is to elevate your foot/ankle so the water goes back to your knee, hip etc.

\*\* In addition, minor swelling and pain can be expected for up to one year after surgery. Most people note major improvements at the 3 and 6 month marks but do not be surprised if you still have minor swelling and pain from 6-12 months. Healing is a long process and is usually complete by 1 year.