

OrthoNeuro

Nicholas A. Cheney, DO
Standard Post-Operative Recovery

Ankle Stabilization:

- This is routinely an outpatient surgery. Routinely, you receive a nerve block so that your foot is numb you can go home that day after the procedure.
- You will be placed into a large bulky splint after surgery. You will follow up in the office two weeks after surgery with Dr. Cheney. You are not to put any weight on your operative extremity. During the first two weeks after surgery you should follow Dr. Cheney's postoperative instructions given to you at the time of surgery.
- At your two-week postoperative visit your dressing and sutures/staples will be removed. X-rays will be taken if deemed necessary by Dr. Cheney. If your wound does not appear to be healed yet we will leave you in a splint for one more week and have you return for reevaluation. If we feel that antibiotics are necessary you will give you those as well. Assuming your wound is healed, you will be placed into a boot or cast. As long as you didn't have any procedures done to cut or fuse bones, you will be allowed to walk in the boot/cast until the next follow up visit
- You will follow-up 4 weeks later (6 weeks after surgery). You will then be placed into an ankle brace. At that time we will initiate physical therapy to increase strength and range of motion of the ankle and calf. It is important that you work on exercises as instructed by therapy to improve your strength and range of motion even when you are not in therapy (7 days a week). You will then follow up 6 weeks later to assess how you progressed in therapy. Hopefully, at this time, you are essentially done with your recovery.

** 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.