

MANAGING YOUR PAIN AFTER SURGERY

PAIN MANAGEMENT promotes healing and aids recovery after surgery. It helps you rest and allows you to do the exercises needed to return you to your best function as quickly and safely as possible.

The effects of anesthesia and pain medication, given to you at the surgery center or hospital, may not wear off by the time you arrive home. **Begin taking your prescribed pain medication as directed even if you feel you don't need it. Waiting too long before taking pain medication may cause increased pain and a temporary "setback" in your recovery.**

It's normal to have some pain post operatively. During the initial recovery period (first 24-48 hours) take the medication every 4-6 hours as directed by your physician. This will keep your pain at a manageable level. As your pain decreases, begin to taper the pain medication by taking one tablet instead of two, or lengthen the time between doses.

Keep a record of when you take your medications. It is easy to forget when you last took your pain medication.

Do not drive while taking narcotics.

Remember to use ice. Cold therapy is one of the best ways to provide pain relief.

Elevate the surgical limb. This helps decrease swelling and pain.

Continued on reverse side...

SHORT-TERM NARCOTIC MEDICATIONS COMMONLY USED TO MANAGE PAIN

- **Percocet** (oxycodone and acetaminophen)
- **Oxycodone**
- **Oxycontin** (extended release oxycodone)
- **Dilaudid** (hydromorphone)
- **Morphine**
- **Norco** (hydrocodone and acetaminophen)
- **Vicodin** (hydrocodone and acetaminophen)
- **Ultram** (tramadol) is a non-opioid narcotic

Common side effects of narcotic pain medications are nausea and constipation. You may start taking an over-the-counter antacid and stool softener *before* surgery to help minimize these side effects. Continue taking as needed *after* surgery.

ADDITIONAL MEDICATIONS

- **Vistaril** (hydroxyzine) is used with pain medication for pain control, muscle relaxation, nausea, and itching.
 - **Acetaminophen** decreases pain and fever and may be used with narcotics. It is best to discuss safe dosing with your physician or pharmacist. Do not exceed 3,000 mg in a 24-hour period.
 - **Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medications (NSAIDS)** are used to decrease pain, swelling, and fever. Aspirin, naproxen, and ibuprofen are common over-the-counter NSAIDS. Celebrex is a prescription NSAID. Your physician may recommend taking an NSAID in addition to the narcotic pain medication.
-

PLAN AHEAD

Always call your physician's clinical assistant at least one business day before you need additional pain medication. Twin Cities Orthopedics cannot provide narcotic prescriptions during evening and weekend hours.