



## Post-operative Calendar After Major Foot and Ankle Surgery

### Days 1-7

- Keep the extremity iced until pain and swelling are minimal. Okay to loosen straps and open the boot for icing (be sure ice doesn't leak). Can also place ice behind the knee.
- Keep boot and dressing dry, clean, and intact. Do not remove your dressing until you are seen at your first post-op visit.
- Shower with boot covered using a plastic bag or cast cover, make sure it is well sealed and won't leak.
- Rest on a couch or bed with the extremity elevated on pillows at or above heart level to reduce pain and swelling.
- Okay to touch the boot flat for balance (15 pounds). Test this on a scale first.

### Days 8-14

- Ice and elevate leg as needed for pain control and swelling.
- Okay to be upright for meals and short walks as needed for critical daily activities.
- Continue to touch the boot flat for balance only (15 pounds).

### Week 2

- Return to clinic for x-rays (if warranted) and dressing removal.
- Possible suture removal if swelling has reduced enough.
- Prescription for physical therapy to treat swelling and home exercises for gentle range of motion as instructed.
- Continue 15-pound weight bearing in walking boot.
- Okay to remove boot for showering once sutures are removed. Sit on a shower chair or bench.

### Week 6

- Return to clinic for repeat x-rays (if warranted).
- Start incremental weight bearing in your walker boot if x-rays confirm healing, gradually weaning off crutches.
- Okay to remove walker boot for sleeping.
- Start more aggressive physical therapy for range of motion.

### Weeks 10-12

- Wean out of walker boot into a shoe that accommodates swelling.

### Week 14-16 (3.5 – 4 months)

- Gradual return to normal activities.
- Return to clinic for final recheck of return to activity goals.

### Tips:

- NSAID medications (Aleve, ibuprofen, naproxen) should be avoided as they can slow down healing time, especially in fractures and bony fusions.
- An arch support for your walker boot is strongly recommended. You can purchase these at Foot Zone, REI, or from a grocery store. Please contact us if you have questions.
- After your sutures are removed, you can shower with your walker boot off. Please do not soak or scrub the foot. We recommend placing a stool or chair in the shower to prevent falls.
- A rolling knee scooter can be purchased online to supplement crutch or walker use.