

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

LATERAL LIGAMENT RECONSTRUCTION

The first 2 weeks

You have just undergone a reconstruction of the ligament(s) on the outside of your ankle.

The procedure has been performed through a small incision just in front of the lateral malleolus (the prominent bone on the outside of your ankle). At the commencement of the procedure, a local anaesthetic agent was infiltrated around the wound, in order to reduce post-operative pain. The wound was closed with small sutures, covered with a dressing and wrapped in a bandage. A "half-cast" was then applied, to protect the position of your ankle and improve post-operative comfort.

Expect *some* pain in your foot, particularly when the local anaesthetic wears off, but this should be controllable with elevation and oral pain-killers, and should improve dramatically over the next 48 hours.

When you are able to comfortably stand and mobilise independently, you can go home, usually on the day of the procedure.

A physiotherapist should see you before your discharge and teach you to safely use crutches or a walking frame.

An anti-coagulant will be administered for 6 weeks, to lessen the risk of a DVT (clot in the calf).

Occasionally, there can be some blood seepage into the dressings and cast, causing staining. This is rarely a cause for concern, unless copious.

It is important that you don't stand or walk on your operated limb.

You may shower, but it is important to keep the cast and dressings dry. These must remain intact until your first post-operative appointment.

At home, keep your foot elevated as much as possible. Hip height is ideal when you are seated.

If you have any concerns regarding your progress before your first post-operative appointment, please ring the rooms, during normal hours, or your local doctor, if available after hours. If you require urgent out-of-hours attention, please ring or present to a hospital Emergency Department at any time. Both Norwest Private and Sydney Adventist Hospitals provide this service.

Subsequent weeks

Following the removal of the cast and extraction of wound sutures at the 2 week post op. visit, you may begin walking on your affected limb, weaning the crutches over a few days. You will wear a CAM Boot at all times, including at night, although this can be removed for bathing. You must avoid rolling your foot "inward" (ie. with the sole directed towards the opposite foot). You should strictly avoid walking on uneven surfaces. These measures will help protect the reconstruction during healing.

Following the 6 week post.op. appointment, a physiotherapist-supervised exercise programme will commence. This will help rehabilitate ankle motion and strength, as well as balance.