Instructions Before Lower Extremity Surgery

You are scheduled to have surgery on your lower limb. After surgery, you will need to keep your leg elevated, restrict activity and wear a compression stocking (or ace wrap) to allow for proper healing. Wounds on the lower limbs take much longer to heal than other parts of the body.

Before Surgery
Buy a pair of knee-high compression stockings (20-30 mm Hg). Bring them to your appointment. You will wear them for 2 months after surgery. You can purchase these at your local pharmacy, or online from Amazon, Bright Life Direct, or Ames Walker.

How to Measure Stocking Size
Look on the package for the correct size and follow these tips:

- Measure first thing in the morning.
- Measure around your ankle at the narrowest point.
- Measure around the widest part of your calf.
- Measure the length from the floor to the crease behind your knee.

You can also use an ace wrap if you cannot get these stockings. If you have been told that you have arterial impairment of the lower extremities, you cannot wear compression stockings. We will give you more information at the time of your procedure.

Activities
You will need to limit your activity for the first 2 weeks after surgery You will spend most of this time with your leg elevated (e.g. in a recliner or on a sofa). You may get up for brief periods of time (10 minutes per hour) to go to the bathroom or kitchen.

You will slowly increase standing or walking each week until you are back to normal activity. This can take about 6 weeks. Healing time varies based on wound location, size, and overall health.

You may need to be off work for one or more weeks. This will depend on your job. You also may need someone to help with household jobs. Returning to your normal routine too fast, can cause infection, scarring, wound opening, or delayed healing.

Who to Call
UW Health Junction Rd Medical Center
(608) 263-6226, option 4

Eastpark Medical Center
(608) 914-0300, option 4

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911.Copyright ©9/2024. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7554