

# ***Lower Extremity Complex Nerve Decompression Post-Op Instructions***

## **Overview:**

You have had your nerve released in your leg, usually below your knee (peroneal nerve). Some patients have their nerve released at the ankle or foot (the tibial nerve). Some patients also have the sensory nerve released at the side of their leg, in a separate incision.

## **After Surgery:**

Immediately after surgery your leg will be wrapped in a tensor bandage to control swelling. Keep your leg elevated above the level of your heart on some pillows for the first few days when you are resting, but you are also allowed to walk around and do gentle walking activity.

## **Incision Care:**

Two days after surgery you may remove the tensor bandage. Underneath you will have an incision. There is glue (a light purple colour) on your incision that helps to keep it sealed.

You may shower over your incision without a dressing starting 2 days after surgery.

After your daily shower wrap the tensor on your leg from toes to knee. Wear the tensor for 2 weeks.

## **Activity and Care at Home:**

Keep your leg elevated above the level of your heart on some pillows for the first few days when you are resting, but you are also allowed to walk around and do gentle walking activity.

No strenuous exercise or long walks for at least 2 weeks.

Do not do any activity that hurts or causes pain at your surgery site.

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## **Pain Management:**

You will have freezing that lasts 1-8 hours that helps with your pain control. It is important that you can walk gently on the leg but not excessively during this time. When the freezing wears off, you may feel tingling in your leg and foot. To manage pain, take Ibuprofen (Advil) and plain Tylenol every 6 hours for the first 48 hours. It is important to keep your leg elevated while you are resting to reduce swelling and reduce pain. If that is not sufficient, then take the prescription medication. Do not take more Tylenol or ibuprofen than is recommended on the bottle in 24 hours. You can refer to the pain management handout. Generally, you will have pain for 24-48 hours then it should decrease significantly. A cool gel pack may also help with the swelling.

## **IMPORTANT:**

The surgery may be performed under general anaesthetic therefore must not operate motor vehicles, boats, power tools or machinery for the first 24 hours.

If you have had surgery under a general anaesthetic or sedation you must not drive or operate other machinery for 24 hours after surgery. Please note that the Motor Vehicle Act of BC 195 (1) prohibits operation of a motor vehicle if "the control of the driver over the driving mechanism of the vehicle... is obstructed." Driving with a hand injury, a leg injury or cast in place that impairs your ability to hold the steering wheel is therefore in violation of the Act. You may resume driving once you have return of function to your operated limb and no longer require narcotic pain medication.

If you experience increasing rather than decreasing pain, bleeding not controlled with pressure, excessive swelling or bruising, increased swelling or redness around the wound, increased drainage from incisions or in your drains, foul odour, fever, chills, please call your surgeon's office. If you experience shortness of breath, or arm or leg pain, call 9-1-1 or visit your emergency department.