

# After Your External Fixator Surgery

## Dr. Paul Nielsen

### Dressings and Wound Care

- After surgery you will have a bulky compressive wrap around the external fixator
- Leave the dressings alone and in place until follow up
  - You must cover the entire fixator for showering to keep it dry
  - Sponge baths are sometimes an easier alternative to getting in the actual shower
- Call our office at 308-865-2570 if something happens to your dressings or fixator device

### Medications

- NSAIDs such as ibuprofen or naproxen are recommended to improve pain after surgery in addition to prescription pain medication
- You will be prescribed a strong pain medication, such as hydrocodone and oxycodone, to control your pain after surgery
- If prescribed a blood thinner like aspirin or Lovenox, take the full prescription to help prevent blood clots

### Activity

- No weight bearing is allowed on your injured leg
  - Crutches, a walker, or a wheelchair are often options for moving around
- Elevating the leg as much as possible is encouraged
  - At or above the level of the heart is preferable
  - Minimize time when your leg is hanging down as that will worsen swelling

### Follow-Up Care

- You will have an appointment in clinic within 1-2 weeks to arrange further treatment
- A second surgery is usually required to remove the fixator device and fix the fracture with long-term hardware such as a plate and screws
  - Swelling usually needs to be improving to proceed to the next surgery