

# General Foot and Ankle Surgery Protocol



Dr. Aaron O'Brien

Coral Desert Orthopedics  
1490 E. Foremaster Dr., Ste. 150  
St. George, UT 84790

Phone: (435) 628-9393  
Fax: (435) 628-9382



## 0 - 2 WEEKS

- Splint:
  - Placed in a splint right after surgery (post - operatively). Wear splint or post-op shoe/boot until first appointment with Dr. O'Brien.
  - No Need to change the dressing. If blood happens to soak through the dressing call Dr. O'Brien's Office.
- Elevation:
  - Elevate as much as possible. Keep foot above heart to adequately elevate. Only bring foot down if having to go to the bathroom or other necessary activities.
  - Do not rest anything under the heel to prevent pressure sores.
- Weight:
  - **DO NOT PUT ANY WEIGHT ON IT (non-weight bearing)**
  - If it was a forefoot surgery and you are in a post-op shoe or boot then only weight on heel and nothing over forefoot.
- Transport:
  - Use items such as a scooter, crutches, walker, wheelchair, etc., to move around and to help keep weight off of it.

## 2 - 6 WEEKS

- Wound:
  - Splint will be removed to check wound at 2 - 3 weeks after surgery. If wound is healing adequately sutures will be removed as well.
- Cast:
  - According to surgical procedure performed a cast will be placed on the appendage where surgery was performed. Occasionally you will be placed in a boot instead.

- Elevation:
  - Elevation is not as critical at this point but is still helpful and necessary.
- Weight:
  - **DO NOT PUT ANY WEIGHT ON IT (non-weight bearing)** unless Dr O'Brien tells you differently. At this point activity is more acceptable using non-weight bearing transport devices.

### **6 - 12 WEEKS**

- Boot:
  - Patient will have cast removed and will placed in a boot. Boot may be removed for gentle range of motion activities and if not walking on it. Patient will still need to sleep with boot on. Once you are full weight bearing through the boot it is ok to not sleep with boot.
- Weight bearing protocol: (If Dr. O'Brien approves it)
  - Over the course of 3 days patient will attempt to get to 25% body weight on foot while using crutches or walker. Patient will advance every 3 days by placing 25% more weight each two days until they have reached full weight bearing with a walking device such as a boot.
  - If at any time patient experiences pain slow down the weight bearing protocol and go back to the weight that did not hurt.
- Elevation:
  - Continue to elevate to decrease swelling as needed.
- Therapy:
  - In most cases physical therapy will start nearing the end of the 12 weeks. Therapy will revolve around patient's gait, strength, and range of motion.

### **12+ weeks**

- Boot:
  - Patient can now move out of boot and into a shoe to proceed with daily activities as usual.
- Weight bearing protocol:
  - Start by wearing a shoe for 30-60 minutes the first day then increase an hour or two every day.
  - Ok to keep increasing if not painful. Reduce time in shoe if painful.
- Therapy:

- Continue with physical therapy as needed for recovery.