



Check Pain Management Off Your List of Foot Surgery Worries

With any surgery comes reasonable concerns. Depending on the person, your mind could start racing anywhere from the seriousness of your condition, to the procedure itself, to out-of-pocket costs or the required downtime. However, when it comes to foot and ankle surgery, there is the inevitable question: How bad will it hurt afterward?

Even if you have a high tolerance for pain, the unfortunate truth is that pain can accompany the healing process following any surgery. But, with the proper care, healing after foot and ankle surgery can be more comfortable than people might expect.

With the availability of such a large variety of highly effective pain medications, fear of pain should be the last deterrent keeping patients from having foot or ankle surgery. Patients can take comfort in knowing that surgeons have an equally vested interest in keeping them comfortable so their surgical experience is positive and they have a speedy recovery.

Patients can receive a local, long-lasting anesthetic immediately following surgery, which significantly decreases pain. Also, in today's healthcare climate where efforts to reduce prescription drug addiction are at an all-time high, there are stronger anti-inflammatory medications available, which can eliminate the need for pain relievers containing narcotics.

Of course, not all pain being created equal, there are other options for patients to manage their comfort levels following surgery. VFASA offers MLS laser therapy for post-operative pain relief and accelerated healing. Additionally, depending on the expected degree of pain, patients can take home a pain pump, which allows them to self-administer pain medication intravenously, allowing for a faster and more potent delivery.

Ultimately, if a patient needs to undergo surgery, it clearly means something is wrong and requires medical correction or extraction. That in mind, surgeons want to help patients feel good about their surgery and think about how better they will feel afterward, versus the pain during healing.

In addition to medication, a tried and true method in controlling pain following foot or ankle surgery is to apply rest, ice, compression and elevation (RICE). Using the RICE method reduces swelling in the surgical area. By reducing the swelling, inflammation is minimized, which in large part lowers pain.

The American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons recommends patients talk to their foot and ankle surgeon before their procedure to determine how much pain they can expect and the plan of action for managing their pain after surgery.

For more information on controlling your pain after foot or ankle surgery, contact Dr. Disabato at 434-977-8040, or visit the American College of Foot and Surgeons' patient education website at FootHealthFacts.org.