Care After Your Total Hip Replacement
(Instructions for Dr. Davies’ Patients)

Your incision
- You may shower, but cover the wound (with Tegaderm or plastic wrap) for 2 weeks.
- Do not submerge the incision in water for at least 6 weeks. This means no baths, hot tubs or swimming pools.
- Do not use heat – it will make the joint swell.
- If you have staples, we will remove them at your first follow-up visit (10 to 14 days after your surgery).
- Check your incision at least twice a day for any signs of possible wound infection. These include, but are not limited to:
  - Increased redness, warmth, pain, tenderness, swelling, or drainage from the incision.
  - Nausea and vomiting, shakes or chills, or fever higher than 101.4° F.

If you have any of the above signs of infection, call Dr. Davies or Megan at 262-387-8300.
Please note that the joint will be warm (not hot) for months.

Activity
- You may bear weight as tolerated or as instructed by Dr. Davies on the surgical leg, with a walker or crutches.
- Most people need a walker or crutches for the first 4 weeks or as instructed by Dr. Davies and then use a single crutch or cane, until Dr. Davies instructs otherwise. When using a cane, hold it in the hand on the side opposite to the hip that had surgery.
- For the next 6 weeks, you should not travel by air and should limit traveling long distances by land. If you do need to travel a longer distance, wear your stockings and walk around every 1 to 1½ hours.
- Keep doing all exercises prescribed by your physical therapist.

Driving
Please do not drive for 3 to 4 weeks from the day of surgery. It is okay to drive when you are off all narcotic pain medicines and you are walking reasonably well with the help of a cane or single crutch. You must be very careful in car seats that may be too low.

Preventing a blood clot
After this kind of surgery, you are at risk for a blood clot in the leg veins, called a deep vein thrombosis (DVT). To help prevent this, you will be asked to wear support (TED) stockings and do foot pumping exercises. Wear the stockings during the day and only on the operative leg for 4 to 6 weeks.

You will also be taking a blood-thinning medicine, Arixtra, for 10 days after surgery. It is injected under the skin in the abdomen, and you will be taught how to do this before you leave the hospital. After the 10 days, you will take baby aspirin (81mg by mouth twice a day) for 4 weeks. Do not take aspirin and Arixtra together.

(If you were taking Coumadin before your surgery, you will most likely go back to taking it as your blood-thinning medicine.)

Call Dr. Davies or Megan at 262-387-8300 if you have these signs of DVT: increased pain, tenderness, swelling or redness in the leg.

A possible complication of DVT is pulmonary embolism (PE), a blood clot in the lung. Go to an emergency room right away if you have any of these signs of PE: chest pain, shortness of breath, or rapid heart rate.
Narcotic pain medicine
You may need narcotic pain medicine (Percocet, oxycodone, Vicodin, etc.) for several days after you leave the hospital. These medicines may cause drowsiness, confusion, nausea or constipation.
- Please do not use the narcotic medicine any longer than you need to. It can be addictive if used over an extended period of time.
- Take a stool softener (Colace, Senna) daily while on this medicine to help prevent constipation. This is available over the counter.
- Please do not drive or operate heavy machinery while taking a narcotic.
- After 1 to 2 weeks, you should no longer need a narcotic pain medicine. If you do need a refill, be aware that narcotic medicines cannot be refilled after hours or on weekends. Please plan ahead for prescription refills to be completed; you may have to pick up the prescription at the office.
- You may take Tylenol, available over the counter, for ongoing pain control. Most patients can safely take up to 1 gram of Tylenol every 6 to 8 hours. Do not take more than 4 grams a day in order to reduce the risk of liver damage. Be aware that some narcotic pain medicines contain Tylenol.

Anti-inflammatory medicine
Do not take anti-inflammatory medicines (such as Aleve or ibuprofen) for 10 days before surgery or while you are taking Xarelto. You may take these after Xarelto has been stopped. If you take Celebrex, you may keep taking it, as it does not affect bleeding.

Iron and vitamins
You will be taking iron pills and multivitamins for 2 weeks before and 6 weeks after your surgery.

Preventive antibiotics
You should take antibiotics before any dental, genitourinary or gastrointestinal procedure. The dentist or doctor in charge of your care should prescribe this.

Preventing hip dislocation
To prevent a postoperative hip dislocation, we caution you to spread your legs while sitting or bending and when standing up from a seated position. Also, follow the hip precautions as outlined by your physical therapist.