

Frequently Asked Questions

We are here for the sole purpose of helping you with your musculoskeletal issues. Do not be afraid to ask questions or reach out with anything you are concerned or unsure about. Please feel free to contact our office for questions at (931) 905-1001 during normal business hours, and if you have acute concerns contact the hospital or answering service. If you are experiencing a medical emergency, contact 911 or go to your local emergency department as soon as possible.

Work/School Restrictions

For all work, job, or school restrictions, by state law Dr. Morris can only give his recommendation as to your weight bearing status and activity restrictions. The onus then lay with the employer, workplace or school system to accommodate those restrictions for either modified duty or medical leave paperwork.

Dr. Morris cannot dictate how long you are off of work or excuse you from work or school; nor can he approve or prohibit the duties that you may be asked to perform, or the time estimates of how much intervention is needed or how long your injury may take to heal. All he can legally provide is the medical recommendation for activity restriction from the date of your current appointment until the scheduled follow up appointment.

Follow up Appointments

Dr. Morris will discuss with you follow up dates and timing, which are guided by extensive data and literature support. These are set to allow for proper soft tissue and bony healing, and for careful evaluation of your musculoskeletal injury. Bony and soft tissue injuries typically take 6-12 weeks to heal, but some patterns and some soft tissue injuries can take longer. Please make every attempt to keep your follow-up appointment, and if unable, please call at least 24 hours in advance to be rescheduled.

Driving

Musculoskeletal injuries can make driving difficult, if not impossible. Two conditions must be met before you can drive: 1) You must not be taking any narcotics or drugs that inhibit your reaction time and decision making; 2) You must be comfortable driving. Injuries, surgeries, and bracing, especially of the lower extremity, can inhibit your ability to operate a vehicle. Before you get behind the wheel, practice with a family member or trusted friend in an empty parking lot, and realize that driving has risks, and you may be found at fault if your injury is suspected to be the cause of a motor vehicle accident or injury.

Weight-bearing and Range of Motion

Modern orthopaedic implants are designed with maximum biomechanical strength and stability. However, Dr. Morris will discuss with you your weight-bearing and range of motion restrictions to protect your injury and maximize your body's ability

to heal. If you are confused about any precautions, please ask, and ensure you are following instructions to protect yourself.

Swelling

Soft tissue injuries can experience a large amount of swelling, both acutely and in the post-operative period. As long as your skin is not experiencing breakdown or changes with your incision or wounds, swelling is no cause for alarm. Blisters may sometimes form in the acute period; make sure Dr. Morris is aware of any blistering. Blisters are a natural effect of swelling, and should be left alone as much as possible. If blisters do burst or leak, keep them clean and covered with a dry bandage.

Swelling can persist for many months, and often up to a year. The best treatment for swelling is to elevate your affected limb above the level of your heart as much as possible, and to use the limb to promote proper venous return to the heart (within your limitations by Dr. Morris). Additionally, modalities such as compression stockings or socks can help assist your body with swelling.

Pain Control

We strive to work with you to address your pain needs with various medications and therapies. It is nearly impossible to completely eliminate pain; however, there are many modalities we can offer to help make pain more manageable. Due to Tennessee State prescribing laws, Dr. Morris is only able to prescribe a small dose of narcotics and controlled substances immediately following surgical intervention. In the setting of

chronic pain that is not adequately addressed, we may recommend a referral to a pain medicine specialist, who can address your concerns more appropriately.

Please note, we are unable to prescribe narcotics to patients who are currently in pain management. If you are in pain management OR receiving pain medications from any other provider, you are responsible for contacting their office to discuss your pain management after surgery. State law dictates we are unable to prescribe medications for patients who are currently under a pain contract.