

# Discharge Instructions for the Patient with an External Fixator

## Activity

Unless otherwise instructed, you may bear weight as tolerated with an assistive device (crutches/walker). Avoid contact sports and running while in the fixator.

## Diet

Eat a diet high in calcium and low in phosphorous. Examples of foods high in calcium are milk, yogurt, dark green vegetables. A multi-vitamin that contains calcium is encouraged. Avoid foods that are high in phosphorous such as cola, dark sodas, beets, beef products and Tang drink.

## Pin Care

You should continue to do pin care as you were instructed, using normal saline at least once a week. Inspect pin sites daily.. If you shower, pin care will need to be done after each shower.

Check under the pin/ wire site dressings daily for signs of infection such as:

- Redness
- Drainage
- Swelling and/ or fever

If you suspect an infection, increase pin care at infected sites to daily, using a mixture of Y2 normal saline and Y2 hydrogen peroxide and Bactroban ointment. If signs of infection do not improve after one to two days of increased pin care, begin antibiotics (you will be sent home from the hospital with a prescription) and call the clinic at (651) 229-3890. You must also continue daily pin cares to affected pin sites.

## Cleaning Instructions for Fixators with Sponge

1. Wash with antibacterial soap
2. You may reuse the sponges after boiling them in water. Use a pot you will not reuse for food
3. Allow fixator to air dry

## Turning Instructions

If you're undergoing a limb lengthening or correction, turn struts manually or turn nuts with a wrench as directed. You must turn the fixator nuts at the same time each day for proper bone regeneration. You also might have an automator on your fixator to help lengthen.

## Your Turning Schedule

Turn struts \_\_\_\_\_

Automator rate:

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

Turn in the direction of the arrow, every \_\_\_\_\_ hours or \_\_\_\_\_ times a day at \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ or refer to specific turning instructions from your doctor.

Contact Telehealth Nursing at 651-229-3890 if you see any of the following:

- Fever over 101.5 F
- Throat irritation
- Severe pain

Discharge Instructions for the Patient with an External Fixator - Somali

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Discharge Instructions for the Patient with an External Fixator - Spanish

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Make An Appointment

[651-290-8707](#)

Refer a Patient

[651-325-2200](#)

This information is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care providers. If you have any questions, talk with your doctor or others on your health care team.

If you are a Gillette patient with urgent questions or concerns, please contact Telehealth Nursing at [651-229-3890](#).