

# Dr. Stephen Thon

## Surgery Guide: Before and Day of Surgery

***“SCHEDULED FOR SURGERY, NOW WHAT?”***

## **BEFORE SURGERY:**

### **PRE-OPERATIVE APPOINTMENT**

We will set up a pre-operative appointment to come back and see Eric Dusin PA-C. At this visit he will go over your surgery in detail, confirm with you the plan, sign the mandatory forms needed from the center/hospital, and if needed fit you for any brace or sling that you may need for after surgery. This is YOUR TIME. If you have any questions or concerns that you want to address, please bring them with you so we can maximize your visit. Read through the rest of this guide as well to make you as prepared as possible.

### **PRE-OPERATIVE CLEARANCE WITH PCP**

You may be asked to see your Primary Care Physician (PCP) prior to surgery for all major repairs, reconstructions, or joint replacements. We do this to optimize your health, medications, and medical problems before surgery to decrease the chance of having any complications from surgery or the anesthesia. This is to ward off any preventable problems during your recovery to make sure you get the best outcome possible. Occasionally, if the pre-operative evaluation shows something concerning, we may delay (but not cancel) your surgery until we can have the issue fixed or controlled.

**NOTE: ALL JOINT REPLACEMENTS REQUIRE a clearance from your PCP in order to proceed with surgery, if you are undergoing a joint replacement you will need to have this done prior to your pre-op appointment so we can review the results. This is a requirement from the surgery centers and hospitals for any joint replacement surgery.**

### **AT YOUR PRE-OPERATIVE APPOINTMENT**

Make sure to inquire about/discuss:

- Ice Machine (Self Pay, unless workers comp)
- Opioid free medication options/Alternative medications
- Nutrition optimization (Self Pay, MEND nutrition)

## **ICE MACHINE: DECREASE PAIN, DECREASE SWELLING**

### **Reduce Pain and Swelling**

Cold therapy units help reduce pain and swelling, speeding up rehabilitation and recovery. It utilizes a recirculation system which helps maintain more consistent and accurate temperatures. This circulates cold water through the sleeve providing pain relief and decreasing swelling after surgery. We recommend icing throughout the day for the first week, especially before sleep.

### **Benefits**

- Reduces pain and swelling
- Speeds up rehabilitation and recovery
- Provides consistent and accurate temperatures
- Easy to use
- Portable

### **Indications**

- Acute injuries
- Chronic conditions
- Post-operative care
- Rehabilitation

### **How to Use**

1. Fill the reservoir with ice water, (utilize water bottles for easier exchange of ice)
2. Place the cold pad on the affected area.
3. Turn on the unit and adjust the temperature to your desired setting.
4. Use for 20-30 minutes at a time.
5. We do recommend that you put a t-shirt or a thin towel between you and the sleeve so that it doesn't injure your skin.

### **Warnings**

- Do not use on open wounds.
- Do not use if the cold pad is damaged.
- Do not leave the unit unattended.

### **Payment:**

- This is usually covered if you are a workers compensation patient
- Price: \$200 (price is subject to change)



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## NUTRITION: A CRITICAL PART OF YOUR RECOVERY

Research consistently shows that orthopedic surgical patients who are nutritionally optimized before and after their procedure experience **fewer post-operative complications, shorter hospital stays, and stronger, faster recoveries**. In fact, studies have found that a large percentage of surgical patients arrive already nutritionally deficient — meaning their bodies are starting the healing process at a disadvantage before the first incision is even made.

### Here's why that matters for you:

**Surgery triggers an intense healing response** — your immune system activates, inflammation rises, and your muscles and tissues begin the hard work of repair. All of that activity requires fuel. Specifically, it requires protein, amino acids, and targeted micronutrients that most everyday diets simply don't deliver in adequate amounts during recovery.

**Muscle loss is a real and serious concern.** Even a few days of reduced activity and bedrest — which is completely normal after surgery — can cause meaningful muscle loss. For orthopedic patients, preserving the muscle surrounding your surgery isn't just about strength; it's about stability, mobility, and your long-term outcome.

**Your body needs more than it did before surgery.** Clinical research points to specific nutrients that play an outsized role in surgical recovery:

- **Arginine and Glutamine** support tissue repair and immune function at the surgical site
- **Leucine and HMB** help your body hold onto muscle mass during the weeks you're less active
- **Vitamin C, Zinc, and Calcium** are essential building blocks for bone healing and wound healing
- **Vitamin D** supports both bone integration and immune resilience post-surgery

**The timing matters.** Beginning nutritional support *before* surgery — ideally one week prior — allows your body to build up the reserves it needs to respond well from day one. Continuing through two to four weeks post-surgery sustains that healing environment when your body needs it most.

### MEND REPAIR & RECOVER: SURGERY — WHAT IT IS AND HOW IT HELPS

As part of your surgical care, we recommend **MEND Repair & Recover: Surgery** — designed specifically for surgical patients. Unlike general protein supplements, MEND is a targeted nutritional support product developed around the unique demands that surgery places on the body. It is backed by published clinical research and used across a range of settings, including the U.S. Military and major hospital systems.

If you have questions about whether nutritional supplementation is right for your recovery, we encourage you to bring it up at your pre-operative appointment. We will walk you through how and when to use it. **MEND is available for purchase in our office — a four-week supply (1 week before and 3 weeks after surgery) is \$169, which represents a savings of \$49 compared to purchasing directly through the MEND website.**



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## OPIOID-FREE PAIN CONTROL JOURNAVX® (suzetrigine)



If you are looking for an opioid-free recovery or want to avoid opioids altogether, JOURNAVX® may be a solution for you. JOURNAVX is a non-opioid prescription pain medication FDA-approved in January 2025. It is not a controlled substance and has no known addictive potential.

### How It Works

JOURNAVX works by selectively blocking a sodium channel found exclusively in pain-sensing nerves, interrupting those signals before they ever reach your brain. JOURNAVX has no effect on the brain the way opioids do — meaning no risk of dependence.

### Clinical Effectiveness

JOURNAVX performed comparably to opioids in reducing moderate-to-severe acute post-surgical pain. Clinical studies showed average pain scores drop from approximately 7 to 4 on the standard 10-point scale.

### Part of Your Pain Control Plan

JOURNAVX works as part of our broader multimodal pain protocol alongside Meloxicam (anti-inflammatory), Tylenol, and a muscle relaxer — each targeting pain through a different pathway. Many patients using this approach do not require opioids at all. A small opioid prescription can still be provided for breakthrough pain if needed, but our goal is that you would never have to use it.

### How to Take It

- **First dose:** 2 tablets (100mg) on an empty stomach before surgery. Clear liquids are permitted.
- **All subsequent doses:** 1 tablet (50mg) every 12 hours.
- **Do NOT** consume grapefruit or grapefruit juice during treatment.

### Possible Side Effects

JOURNAVX is generally well tolerated. The most common side effects reported in clinical trials were itching, muscle spasms, and rash — all typically mild. Contact our team if any side effect is bothersome or does not resolve.

If you are interested in JOURNAVX or have questions about whether it is right for your procedure and health history, bring it up at your pre-operative appointment. More information is available at [www.journavx.com](http://www.journavx.com).

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### MEDICATIONS TO STOP BEFORE SURGERY

These medications need to be stopped **7 days** before your surgery date:

<b>GLP-1 Medications</b>	<b>(Ozempic, Mounjaro, Wegovy, etc...)</b>
<b>Ibuprofen</b>	<b>(Motrin, Advil)</b>
<b>Naproxen</b>	<b>(Naprosyn, Aleve, Anaprox)</b>
<b>Diclofenac</b>	<b>(Voltaren, Cataflam)</b>
<b>Indomethacin</b>	<b>(Indocin)</b>
<b>Etodolac</b>	<b>(Lodine)</b>
<b>Flurbiprofen</b>	<b>(Ansaid)</b>
<b>Ketoprofen</b>	<b>(Ordis, Oruvail)</b>
<b>Nabumetone</b>	<b>(Relafen)</b>
<b>Oxaprozin</b>	<b>(Daypro)</b>
<b>Piroxicam</b>	<b>(Feldene)</b>
<b>Salsilate</b>	<b>(Disalcid)</b>
<b>Sudlinac</b>	<b>(Clinoril)</b>
<b>Meloxicam</b>	<b>(Mobic)</b>
<b>Fish Oil</b>	

All herbal supplements and non-prescription botanicals (ginkgo, garlic, ginseng, St. John's wort, etc.)

These medication should be discontinued on day of surgery:

- **ACE inhibitors** (e.g., lisinopril, enalapril, ramipril)
- **ARBs** (e.g., losartan, valsartan, candesartan)
- **Diuretics ("water pills")** (e.g., furosemide, hydrochlorothiazide)
- **Vasodilators** (e.g., hydralazine, minoxidil)
- **Oral diabetes medicines**, including metformin
- **Insulin bolus doses** (fast-acting), unless specifically told otherwise
- **Antacids** (e.g., Tums, Maalox, Mylanta)
- **Monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs)** unless cleared by your anesthesiologist

If you are taking **Coumadin, Eliquis, Plavix, Pradaxa, Ticlid, Xarelto or other blood thinners**, please contact your prescribing doctor before your pre-operative appointment or surgery date to see if you need to continue or stop these medicines.

It's okay to take:

**Tylenol or Acetaminophen**

### PRESCRIPTIONS AND MULTIMODAL PAIN CONTROL

We adhere to an opioid sparing/limiting approach when it comes to pain control and post-operative care. This has the benefits of fewer side effects, better pain relief, and less risk of addiction. We will provide multiple medications that work on different ways to control your pain including a heavy anti-inflammatory, Tylenol, and a muscle relaxer. You will be given a small prescription for opioids, but these are only to be used as needed for any breakthrough pain. Many patients do not ever take any opioids in their recovery process using this approach, so if you do not need them, you do not need to take them. We will send your prescriptions to your pharmacy or to the hospital pharmacy (when applicable) before your surgery so you can pick them up ahead of time.

The medications we prescribe on a regular basis for surgery are: Meloxicam (Mobic), Methocarbamol, and Oxycodone. If Dr. Thon prescribes additional medications outside of these, please take them as directed as they are needed for your specific case.

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### **SLING/BRACE**

If you will require a sling/brace for your recovery after surgery, we will fit and provide one at your pre-operative visit. Please bring these with you on the day of surgery. We will apply them to your shoulder/knee before you wake up from surgery to make sure it is protected

### **ICE MACHINE**

You will be given the option to purchase a cold pack machine; please see the attached information and let your surgery scheduler know if you would like to pursue this option. *WE HIGHLY RECOMMEND THEM AS THEY MAKE ICING CONVENIENT/EASY, DECREASE PAIN, AND DECREASE SWELLING.* Unfortunately, this is one piece of equipment that insurance does not cover, it is ~\$200\* for purchase (\*price subject to change). If you elect to purchase an Ice Machine, we will provide this for you at your pre-operative appointment. This machine has a sleeve which is attached to an ice cooler. You place ice and some water in the cooler and plug this into a regular outlet. This circulates cold water through the sleeve providing pain relief and decreasing swelling after surgery. We recommend icing throughout day for the first week especially before sleep. We do recommend that you put a t-shirt or a thin towel between you and the sleeve so that it doesn't injure your skin.

### **SET UP FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENT**

Make sure you set up your first follow up appointment after surgery. In most cases, this will be ~10-21 days after your surgery. As a general rule, we will see you at ~2 weeks after your surgery. Most post-operative appointments are with our physician assistants. If you need to schedule your follow up appointment(s) please call our main office line at 303-344-9090 or email the team at [ThonCareTeam@occ-ortho.com](mailto:ThonCareTeam@occ-ortho.com).

### **SET UP FIRST PHYSICAL THERAPY APPOINTMENTS**

Make sure you set up your first Physical Therapy (PT) appointments after surgery as well. When you start physical therapy will be highly dependent on what surgery you are having. Some surgeries we will have you start right away; others will be delayed by a few weeks afterwards. We will discuss this with you at your pre-operative visit.

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## **FMLA AND SHORT-TERM DISABILITY POLICY**

### **WHAT IS FMLA AND SHORT TERM DISABILITY**

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is a federal law allowing eligible employees to take unpaid, job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons. Similarly, short-term disability may be available through your insurance.

### **OUR FMLA AND SHORT-TERM DISABILITY PAPERWORK POLICY**

**From the date we receive your completed paperwork, our team has two weeks (10 business days) to complete and return any FMLA paperwork.** If you need rush processing (3–5 business days), a **\$25 rush fee** is required.

#### **Fees (see below for further details)**

- First set of paperwork for this condition: No charge
- Rush processing (3–5 business days): \$25
- Each additional set after the first (exceeding 1 page): \$35 per set
- Payment is required before paperwork is released

#### **How to Submit**

Fill out as much of the form as possible before submitting (form is below) — including your personal information, employer details, requested leave dates, and job classification (sedentary vs. heavy labor). *Incomplete forms will delay processing.* Drop off in person to our medical assistant or email to [ThonCareTeam@occ-ortho.com](mailto:ThonCareTeam@occ-ortho.com).

#### **After We Return Your Paperwork**

You are responsible for submitting completed forms to your employer and/or any required state disability agency. We will deliver completed forms in person or via email.

Completion of all paperwork is based on medical necessity and provider discretion. We will place standard restrictions according to each procedure — no exceptions or special requests will be made after surgery.

Questions? Contact us at [ThonCareTeam@occ-ortho.com](mailto:ThonCareTeam@occ-ortho.com) or 303-344-9090 ext. 3029.

#### **Paperwork Processing Policy**

Standard processing time: 7–10 business days Rush processing (3–5 business days): **\$25**

First set of paperwork for this condition: **No charge**

Each additional set after the first, if it exceeds more than 1 page: **\$35 per set**

Payment (if applicable) required **BEFORE** release

Incomplete forms will delay processing, Completion is based on medical necessity and provider discretion

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## **DAY OF SURGERY:**

### **WHEN TO SHOW UP FOR SURGERY?**

In general, you will need to show up about 1.5-2.5 hours ahead of your scheduled surgery time to check-in and get prepped for surgery. You will get a call from the surgery center or hospital within the week prior to your scheduled surgery date to let you know what time your surgery is and exactly when to arrive at the facility.

### **RIDE TO/FROM SURGERY**

You **must** have a responsible adult to take you home and stay with you overnight. This should be a friend or family member. Please coordinate this prior to your scheduled surgery date. Your ride does not have to stay at the hospital the whole time you are there. We will call them after the surgery. Ride sharing (Uber and Lyft) are unfortunately not acceptable/safe to take you home after surgery. You should expect to be in the recovery room for about 1-2 hours after surgery before you can go home.

### **EATING/DRINKING BEFORE SURGERY**

Do not take in any solid food or milk and creamer products after **midnight** the evening before your surgery or procedure, unless otherwise instructed. Up until **2 hours before the time you check-in** (at least 4 hours before your surgery time) for surgery or procedure, you may continue to drink **ONLY** clear liquids. **The ONLY acceptable clear liquids** during this time include:

- Water, Gatorade®, Juices – apple, cranberry – anything you can see through (without pulp), **No orange juice!**
- Starting **2 hours before your check-in** time, stop all liquids. This includes chewing gum or sucking on hard candy.
- TAKE only the medication you have been instructed to take with a sip of water.
- DO NOT smoke, chew tobacco, or use any recreational drugs the day before or the day of your surgery.

Please follow these instructions strictly. This will avoid unnecessary discomfort, delays, or possible cancellations for yourself (or your child), during and after your surgery or procedure.

### **NERVE BLOCK**

If available, the anesthesia team will offer to perform a nerve block for your surgery. This is where they inject numbing medication around some of your nerves to help with pain control during and after surgery. It will make the sensation in your arm/leg go numb while in affect. It generally lasts ~12-18 hours (sometimes can be longer) and then wears off. They are very helpful both during and after surgery as it allows the anesthesia team to use less medicine during your surgery and you to recover faster.

### **OTHER SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS**

- Driving a car, operating machines or appliances, making major decisions or ingestion of alcohol should be avoided for 24 hours after having anesthesia.
- Please shower with anti-bacterial soap for 3 days prior to your surgery or procedure. This is to help decrease the risk of infection. The recommended anti-bacterial soap is **LIQUID DIAL GOLD or HIBICLENS**, this can be purchased at any grocery or drug store.
- Wear clothing that will be comfortable and easy for you to put on following your procedure.
- Please bring your **insurance card** and a **photo ID**. Also bring your **pharmacy card**, if you have one.
- Please only bring enough money to pay for your copay (if necessary).
- Please bring a list of your current medications with doses, times, and the reason you are taking them.
- **DO NOT** bring jewelry, hairpieces, contact lenses, etc. Bring a case for your glasses or hearing aids if you wear them.
- **DO NOT** wear make-up, perfume or lotion, especially on your face or the surgical site.

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## DR. THON CARE TEAM CONTACT INFO:

Direct Phone Extension

**Team Email**

Eric Dusin, PA  
Cassidy Cartwright  
Teresa O'Bannon  
Website

**\*FASTEST RESPONSE\***

Physician Assistant  
Clinical Coordinator  
Surgery Scheduler

303-344-9090 ext. 3029

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## LOCATIONS:

### CLINIC LOCATIONS

**Parker:** 11960 E. Lioness Way  
Suite #260  
Parker, CO 80134  
303-344-9090

**Lowry:** 8101 E. Lowry Blvd  
Suite #230  
Denver, CO 80230  
303-344-9090

### SURGERY LOCATIONS

*Rose Hospital*  
4567 E 9th Ave  
Denver, CO 80220  
303-320-2121

*Centennial Hospital*  
14200 E Arapahoe Rd  
Centennial, CO 80112  
303-699-3000

*Denver Orthopedic  
Surgery Center (DOSC)*  
8515 W Coal Mine Ave,  
Littleton, CO 80123

*OCC Surgery Center*  
135 Inverness Drive East  
Englewood, CO 80112  
303-220-0810

## SCHEDULING VISITS (CLINIC & PHYSICAL THERAPY):

### OCC Clinics

Phone: 303-344-9090  
Fax: 303-344-1922

\*MRI or CT follow ups may be done via telehealth phone visits or in person (it is your choice). Please call us to set up a follow up visit AFTER you have scheduled your MRI/CT when applicable\*

### OCC Physical Therapy – 13 locations

<https://occ-ortho.com/physical-therapy>

Phone: 1-866-506-7846

\*If you would like to do PT at an outside facility, please let the referral coordinator know when they call you and they will help facilitate you getting the proper therapy for after surgery\*

We take pride in getting you the best result possible! If you have any issues, concerns, problems, difficulties, or questions please contact us as soon as possible. Open communication is how we get the best outcome for YOU!

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