

Warning Signs After Surgery

Most recoveries go smoothly. Knowing the few things that need a phone call — and the fewer that need 911 — keeps it that way.

CALL 911 — DO NOT WAIT

- Chest pain or pressure
- Sudden shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Signs of stroke: facial droop, arm weakness, slurred speech
- Fainting or unresponsiveness

— Call the office promptly — (540) 667-8975

- Increasing redness, warmth, or drainage at the incision
- Fever over 101.5°F or shaking chills
- New calf pain, tenderness, or marked swelling in either leg
- Sudden worsening pain not controlled by your medication plan
- An incision that opens, or bleeding that does not stop with pressure
- Inability to bear weight that is new — not just soreness
- Numbness or weakness that is new or spreading

— Normal — and usually not a cause for alarm

- Swelling and warmth around the joint for weeks after surgery
- Bruising that travels down the limb
- Soreness after increased activity
- Clicking sensations in a knee replacement
- Disrupted sleep and fatigue in the early weeks

WHEN UNSURE, CALL

No symptom is too small to ask about. A two-minute phone call beats a week of worrying — and the office would always rather hear from you early.

**The full patient library**

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This guide is educational and reflects Dr. Seem's general approach. It does not replace an examination, individualized advice, or the instructions you receive from your surgical team and the facility where your surgery takes place. For medication, fasting, and day-of-surgery instructions, always follow the current guidance from Winchester Medical Center or Valley Health Surgery Center. For emergencies, call 911. Reviewed and approved by Michael E. Seem, MD. ROSA®, Persona IQ®, and mymobility® are registered trademarks of Zimmer Biomet, and HipInsight™ of its owner — named only to identify technologies used in practice; no manufacturer endorsement or affiliation is implied. · Michael E. Seem, MD · Winchester Orthopaedic Associates · 128 Medical Circle, Winchester, VA 22601 · (540) 667-8975 · © 2026