ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY RECOVERY TIMELINE

Post-Operative Milestone Tracker
Patient: _____
Procedure: _____
Surgery Date: _____
Surgeon: _____

Phase
Goals & Care Instructions
Days 1 - 3
Acute Phase

- Pain management via prescribed medication schedule
- RICE protocol: Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation
- Gentle ankle pumps and breathing exercises
- Initial physical therapy assessment

Weeks 1 - 2
Wound Healing

- Incision site monitoring; keep dressing clean/dry
- Gradual increase in weight-bearing (as permitted)
- Suture or staple removal at follow-up
- Begin basic range-of-motion exercises

Weeks 3 - 6
Early Mobility

- Formal Physical Therapy 2-3 times per week
- Decrease reliance on assistive devices (crutches/walker)
- Transition to over-the-counter pain relief
- Focus on restoring normal gait and flexibility

Weeks 6 - 12
Strengthening

- Progressive resistance and strength training
- Increased duration of daily walking and activity
- Review return-to-work timeline with physician
- Discontinue functional bracing (if applicable)

Months 3 - 6
Full Activity

- Return to low-impact sports (cycling, swimming)

- Final assessment of functional outcomes
- Transition to home-based maintenance exercise
- Long-term scar tissue management

Physician Notes / Restrictions:
Contact clinic immediately for: Fever >101.5F, excessive swelling, or sudden calf pain.