

## TRAUMA PRACTICE MANAGEMENT MANUAL

### 9. OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

#### I. Orthopedic Surgery Response Guideline

#### Guideline for Orthopedic Surgeon Response Times

##### Purpose

To ensure timely and appropriate orthopedic evaluation and intervention for trauma patients, this guideline outlines the criteria and requirements for orthopedic surgeon response times at our trauma center.

#### Definition and Requirements for Orthopedic Surgeon Response

##### 1. Response Time

- Orthopedic evaluation must occur within **30 minutes** from the time of request for orthopedic evaluation.
- The time interval will be measured from the **time of request** to the **start of the orthopedic evaluation**.

##### 2. Criteria for Orthopedic Evaluation

Orthopedic evaluation within 30 minutes is required in the following clinical situations:

- **Hemodynamically Unstable Due to Pelvic Fracture:**  
Patients presenting with hemodynamic instability directly related to a **pelvic fracture** require immediate orthopedic evaluation.
- **Suspected Extremity Compartment Syndrome:**  
Patients with clinical signs of **extremity compartment syndrome** require urgent evaluation to prevent permanent damage.
- **Fractures/Dislocations with Risk of Avascular Necrosis:**  
This includes fractures or dislocations with potential for **avascular necrosis**, such as injuries involving the **femoral head** or **talus**.
- **Vascular Compromise Due to Fracture or Dislocation:**  
Any patient with a fracture or dislocation that has caused **vascular compromise** will require immediate orthopedic intervention.
- **Neurological Deficit from Suspected Spinal Cord Injury:**  
Patients presenting with a neurological deficit suggestive of spinal cord injury requiring evaluation by a neurosurgeon or an orthopedic spine surgeon.
- **Trauma Surgeon Discretion:**  
Orthopedic consultation will be required at the trauma surgeon's discretion in any case where orthopedic input is deemed necessary for patient care.

##### 3. Documentation

- Orthopedic response times must be **documented** in the patient's medical record.
- Documentation must include communication between the trauma and orthopedic teams, especially when a resident or advanced practice provider (APP) performs the initial consultation.

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**4. Attending Orthopedic Surgeon Involvement**

- The **attending orthopedic surgeon must be involved in clinical decision-making** for the care of these patients, regardless of whether the initial evaluation is performed by a resident or APP.
- **Communication between the resident/APP and the attending orthopedic surgeon** must be documented to ensure appropriate oversight.

**5. Consultants**

- An **orthopedic resident or APP** may perform the initial evaluation, but they must immediately **communicate with the attending orthopedic surgeon** and document this communication.
- The attending orthopedic surgeon must provide the final approval for any clinical decisions regarding management or surgical intervention.

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**Compliance and Monitoring**

- The trauma center will regularly review compliance with these response time requirements through the **Performance Improvement (PI) process**.
- Cases where orthopedic response times exceed 30 minutes will be reviewed to identify potential barriers and implement corrective actions to ensure timely care.

**Effective Date:** March 2023

**Next Review Date:** March 2026

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