



Post-Operative Instructions for Knee Arthroscopy

GUIDELINES

- After 48 hours you can remove the bulky dressing and apply Band-Aids over the sutures. Keep incisions completely dry when showering with waterproof Band-Aids and/or plastic covering (Tegaderm) until sutures are removed at your follow up appointment. After showering remove Band-Aids and reapply fresh Band-Aids. Avoid soaking the knee in a bathtub or Jacuzzi for 2 weeks.
- The numbing medicine which was injected into your knee at the time of the surgery lasts for 8-12 hours. Begin taking the pain medication as your sensation returns. For the first 2-3 days, keep your knee elevated when at rest. Cryocuff, crushed ice, or a bag of frozen vegetables can be applied to the knee for 20 min 4-6 times a day then as needed. To avoid a burn injury, place a cloth onto the skin before applying ice.
- Please contact the office if you experience increasing pain, redness, drainage, thigh/calf pain, chest pain, shortness of breath, or fever greater than 101.5. It is common to have minimal drainage from the incisions for the first 1-2 days.

WEIGHT-BEARING AND EXERCISES

- You may put weight on the leg with use of crutches for 2-3 days. Begin to wean down to one crutch. Crutch should be placed under the arm opposite the operative knee. Gradually discontinue any assistive aids.
- Please begin ankle pumps immediately. Also, begin gentle knee flexion, quad sets, and straight leg raises the day of surgery. Please refer to the exercise instructions provided. Mobilizing at home with crutches is encouraged as it will help decrease the risk of blood clots.



MEDICATIONS

- You have been prescribed a narcotic pain medication. Please use as directed and contact the office for any side effects. Take it with food. Do not drive, drink alcohol, perform activities which require concentration, or make major decisions while taking the pain medication. Constipation may occur and can be treated with over the counter Senokot and Milk of Magnesia. Contact your primary care doctor if this problem persists.
- Anti-inflammatories are useful for pain/swelling and can be used with the pain medication. Take Ibuprofen 600 mg three times a day with food. This medicine works together with the narcotic pain medication and may allow you to wean off your narcotic faster. Do **NOT** take this medication if you are allergic, have a history of ulcers, kidney disease, or it is otherwise contraindicated. Discontinue if you develop stomach upset.
- Unless you are allergic or it is otherwise contraindicated, take Ecotrin Aspirin 325 mg every morning with food for 3 weeks to reduce the risk of blood clots.
- Lingering effects of the anesthesia may cause temporary nausea. Start a bland, soft diet the first day and progress to a normal healthy diet. Drink plenty of fluids. If a smoker then try to quit or cut back to improve recovery.

POST-OPERATIVE APPOINTMENT

- If you do not already have a follow up appointment scheduled for one week after the surgery then please call the office to make this appointment which may be with your surgeon or the Physician Assistant. During this visit sutures may be removed, arthroscopic findings will be reviewed, and further treatment such as physical therapy will be discussed.

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EARLY POST-OPERATIVE EXERCISES

Start the following exercises as soon as you are able. You can begin these in the recovery room shortly after surgery. You may feel uncomfortable at first, but these exercises will speed your recovery and actually diminish your post-operative pain.

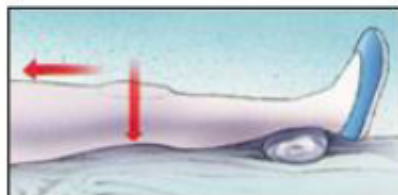
Quad Sets - Tighten your thigh muscle. Try to straighten your knee. Hold for 5 to 10 seconds. Repeat this exercise approximately 10 times during a two minute period, rest one minute and repeat.



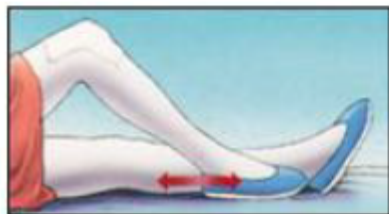
Straight Leg Raises - Tighten the thigh muscle with your knee fully straightened on the bed, as with the Quad set. Lift your leg several inches. Hold for five to 10 seconds. Slowly lower. Repeat until your thigh feels fatigued.



Ankle Pumps - Move your foot up and down rhythmically by contracting the calf and shin muscles. Perform this exercise periodically for two to three minutes, two or three times an hour in the recovery room. Continue this exercise until you are fully recovered and all ankle and lower-leg swelling has subsided.



Knee Straightening Exercises - Place a small rolled towel just above your heel so that it is not touching the bed. Tighten your thigh. Try to fully straighten your knee and to touch the back of your knee to the bed. Hold fully straightened for five to 10 seconds. Repeat until your thigh feels fatigued.



Bed-Supported Knee Bends - Bend your knee as much as possible while sliding your foot on the bed. Hold your knee in a maximally bent position for 5 to 10 seconds and then straighten. Repeat several times until your leg feels fatigued or until you can completely bend your knee.