



**INSTRUCTIONS AFTER ACL REPAIR OR RECONSTRUCTION**  
**By Vic Goradia, MD**

**BRACE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW HAVE BEEN CIRCLED FOR YOU:**

- a. Leave brace on until your follow up appointment. You may loosen if needed.
- b. You only need to wear your brace while you are walking.

**PUTTING WEIGHT ON YOUR LEG:**

- a. You may place as much weight as you can tolerate on the leg and use crutches or a walker if needed. You may wean yourself from the crutches, as you are able to get around without a limp.
- b. You must use crutches and NOT place any weight on leg until follow-up visit.

**ICE:** Apply \_\_\_\_\_ continuously while awake for 2 days, then as needed.

**BANDAGES:** Leave the dressing in place over the knee for 2 days. Afterwards you may apply clean gauze or band-aids over the incisions. If you have a clear plastic covering over the incision, leave this in place. It is ok to shower over this as it seals the incision. If you have Steri-Strips (paper tape covering an incision) or glue, leave these in place. You may loosen the knee dressings if they feel too tight. Do not apply Neosporin!

**SHOWERING:**

- You MAY shower but keep your incision dry. Apply clean bandages over the incision after showering.
- DO NOT take a bath or get into a pool or hot tub for 2 weeks after surgery!
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**PAIN PILLS:** For the *first 24 hours* take your pain pills on a regular schedule as noted on the medicine bottle. Knee injections given during surgery typically wear off 4-6 hours after surgery and will be associated with increasing pain at that time.

**POST-OP MEDS:**

\_\_\_ Ibuprofen 600mg    \_\_\_ Hydrocodone 10/325    \_\_\_ Phenergan 25mg    Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**COMMON SIDE EFFECTS AFTER SURGERY:**

- Drowsiness, lightheadedness, and nausea may result from the pain medication.
  - PAIN – You need to be as comfortable as possible, but also understand that no amount of pain medication, ice, or rest will completely remove the pain after surgery.
  - Constipation can be caused by pain medication. Increase your fluid intake, drink fruit juices and take an over the counter stool softener if necessary for constipation. If it persists contact your primary care doctor.
  - Swelling and stiffness about the knee are expected for the first several weeks following your surgery. Continuing to ice, use anti-inflammatories, and doing the exercises provided will help this.
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- Mild itching can occur as a result of pain medications. You may try some Benadryl.

**SIDE EFFECTS THAT SHOULD NOT BE IGNORED:**

- Difficulty breathing, a severe rash, extreme drowsiness, and nausea that is uncontrolled with Phenergan. If your side effect is life threatening, call 911, if it is not life threatening, contact our office or go to the emergency room for further instruction.

**YOUR FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT:**

- An appointment card will be given to you the day of surgery. If you need to confirm or change the appointment time, please contact the office at (804) 678-9000.

**PHYSICAL THERAPY APPOINTMENTS:** Please make sure you are dressed appropriately for your physical therapy appointments. It is important to wear tennis shoes and shorts so the physical therapist can work with you.

**BLOOD CLOT PREVENTION:** Pumping your ankles (bringing your toes toward your chest and pushing down like you would on a gas pedal) is another important exercise to do. You need to do these hourly while awake for 7 days to keep blood circulating and prevent a blood clot.

**YOU SHOULD CALL THE OFFICE AT (804) 678-9000 IF:**

- You notice that your bandages are completely saturated with blood. Some blood on the bandages is okay, however, persistent bleeding is not normal.
- You have a temperature above 101 degrees. Many patients will have an elevated temperature for the first few days after surgery. However, a temperature above 101 degrees is not normal, especially if associated with chills or severe pain.
- You have pain that is not “controlled” with pain medication and ice. The pain medication and ice should help “control” your pain, however, it WILL NOT take away all of the pain.
- Your toes are cold, numb, or purple. Your foot may swell or feel cool because you are lying around without moving the leg. It should become warmer as you move around more. A purple, cold, numb foot that does not get better with movement or loosening the bandage is NOT normal.

**DO NOT** operate heavy machinery, drive an automobile or make important decisions while under the influence of anesthesia for at least 24 to 48 hours after surgery or while taking pain medications. You may resume driving when you feel you can do so safely.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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Doctor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Patient Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

