

Post-op Instructions for Knee Ligament Reconstruction Patients

You may experience some swelling in the joint. This is usually due to fluid used during the surgery for visualization. This fluid is reabsorbed by your body over time. You may have bruising in the operated leg as well. This may travel down the leg with gravity.

Dressing: The dressing should stay on until the first post-operative visit. The dressing should stay dry during this period. If you decide to shower, please cover the dressing with plastic so that it stays dry. Your stitches will be removed at your first visit after surgery. Please do not bathe or swim for the first 4 weeks.

Ice Machine: If you are given an ice machine, use it as directed by the vendor. If you do not have an ice machine, you may use ice packs to control the pain and swelling. Do not put the ice directly on the skin. Use ice for 20 minutes at a time, three times a day.

Activity: Crutches may be necessary during the first week after surgery. You may continue using them until you are able to walk comfortably without support. You may ambulate immediately and put as much weight as is comfortable on the operated leg as long as you are in a brace locked in extension or in a knee immobilizer. Physical therapy will be discussed at your first follow-up visit after surgery.

Brace: You should wear the knee immobilizer/brace whenever you are up and about and while sleeping for the first 7-14 days. You may remove the immobilizer/brace if you are resting or to perform your exercises.

Exercises: Please place a towel roll under the ankle and work on achieving full extension (with the brace off) during the first week after surgery. This should be performed for 15 minutes at least 3 times a day. Other exercises include heel pumps and straight leg raises while wearing the locked brace. Physical therapy will begin after the first follow-up visit.

Medications: You will be given a prescription for pain medication. Please take the pain medication with food. Do not drink alcoholic or drive if you are using pain medications.

Work: You will discuss when you can return to work on your first post-operative visit.

Driving: You will discuss when you can drive with your surgeon. Generally, you need to feel close to 100% recovered with the operated knee before you can consider driving.

Follow-up: Your follow-up visit will be approximately 7 days after surgery. Please call the office to confirm your follow-up appointment.

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