
POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

ACL Reconstruction with Meniscus Repair

Post-Op Instructions

Day of Surgery

- **Diet:** begin with liquids and light foods (Jell-O, soup, etc.). Progress to your normal diet if you are not nauseated.
- **Brace:** keep the brace locked in full extension when walking with crutches until your first post-op visit. **No weight on the operated leg.** You may unlock the brace when sitting and work on gentle knee bending to 90 degrees.
- **Ice:** do **not** put ice directly on your skin. Use it frequently for the first 72 hours, 20 minutes at a time.
- **Showering:** no showering. Leave bandages in place.
- **Activity:** keep your leg elevated on a pillow placed under your ankle. **Do not put a pillow under your knee!** It is important to keep your leg straight. Use crutches, with no weight on the operated leg. Keep the brace on, but you may unlock it when sitting.
- **Exercises:** begin ankle pumps and gentle knee bending, **not past 90 degrees.** Attempt straight leg raises (with brace on). Stay non-weightbearing on the operated leg.

Medications

- **Pain medication:** Norco (hydrocodone/acetaminophen) or oxycodone.
- If you are taking oxycodone, you may also take Tylenol (acetaminophen) 500 mg tablets, 2 tablets every 8 hours. **Do not take Tylenol (acetaminophen) if you were given Norco,** because Norco already contains acetaminophen.
- Do not drink alcohol while taking pain medication. Slowly wean off the pain medication as your pain improves.
- **Aspirin 325 mg:** 1 tablet daily for 2 weeks after surgery.
- **Stool softener:** pain medication can cause constipation. Drink plenty of water and take an over-the-counter stool softener as needed.

First and Second Days After Surgery

- **Medications:** continue as instructed above.
- **Bandages:** no showering; keep bandage in place.
- **Exercises:** ankle pumps and gentle range of motion to 90 degrees.
- **Icing:** continue to use ice (or ice machine) frequently.

Third Day After Surgery

- **Medications:** continue as instructed above.
- **Bandages (after 72 hours):** remove the outer bandages; leave the Steri-Strips in place. You may shower, but keep the incisions as dry as possible (cover with plastic wrap or a garbage bag over the leg). It is best to sit down in the shower to avoid slipping. Put the brace back on after removing the outer dressing.
- **Exercises:** continue exercises as above. The brace must be locked in extension (straight) when walking with crutches. Stay non-weightbearing on the operated leg.
- **Ice:** continue to ice frequently with the ice machine or a regular ice pack. Do not put it directly on your skin; place a thin layer of clothing or a pillowcase between the ice pack and your skin. Ice for 20–30 minutes on, then 20–30 minutes off.

Overall: non-weightbearing on the operated leg. Brace locked in extension when walking with crutches. Begin gentle range of motion of the operated knee to 90 degrees.

Physical Therapy

If you are planning to attend PT, please make an appointment for 3–7 days after surgery.

Follow-Up

You will see Megan Vanderbur, PA-C, **7–10 days after surgery**.

What to Expect

Your knee and lower leg will be swollen. It may take 4 weeks or longer for the swelling to go away. It is also common to notice bruising around the thigh, knee and calf.

Problems

Please call our office at **(812) 376-9353** if you have any questions or problems. Contact us immediately if you notice a fever greater than 101°F, excessive bleeding or drainage from the surgery site, calf pain, or shortness of breath.

These instructions are general guidelines from Dr. Tannenbaum's office. Always follow any specific instructions given to you by Dr. Tannenbaum or his team. Questions? Call Southern Indiana Orthopedics at (812) 376-9353.