

Arthroscopic Knee Surgery Helpful Hints & Important Precautions

Diet

- You may resume clear liquids and light foods after surgery (jello, soup, etc.)
- Progress to your normal diet as tolerated as long as you are not nauseated.

Medications:

- NSAID's must be stopped 7 days prior to surgery.
- During surgery I will often inject a numbing medicine like novocaine that will give some pain relief for several hours after surgery. It is important to begin taking your pain pills before this medicine wears off.
- You will be given pain medication. It will begin to work within 15 minutes after taking it with a maximal effect in one to two hours. Normally, it is taken every 6 hours but if the pain is severe, it can be used every 4 hours.
- Common side effects of the medication are nausea, constipation, itching, and drowsiness.
- The best way to prevent nausea is to take the medicine with a little food, start with just one pill, and be patient while the medicine begins to work. Usually, after the first few doses the nausea will go away.
- I strongly recommend you take an over-the-counter stool softener such as Colace or eat a homeopathic diet heavy in high fiber fruits such as prunes to avoid constipation.
- You will be given 24 hours of oral antibiotics. Take these with food. You will be told when to start these when you leave the surgery center, usually at dinner when you get home.
- Take Benadryl one half hour before your narcotic if you experience itching.
- Do not drive or operate heavy machinery while taking Norco or other narcotics.
- You should take 325 mg enteric-coated aspirin once a day for six weeks to help prevent blood clot formation, you will be
- Transition to Tylenol as your pain subsides, DO NOT take Tylenol while you are taking Norco as Norco has 325 mg of Tylenol in each pill. Patients with normal liver function should not consume more than 4000 mg of Tylenol per day. If you are taking Tramadol it is ok to supplement with Tylenol.
- You can also supplement your pain medication with NSAIDS (Aleve, Advil, etc)

Bandages & Sling:

- Your postoperative dressing has two layers you need to understand in order to properly care for your surgery site. Your incisions were closed with stitches. Your stitches should be left in place until I see you at your first postoperative date.
- The second layer is a large white fluffy dressing that is loosely held in place with tape and the overlying compression stocking.
- Occasionally, there will be a small amount of blood in this dressing which is nothing to worry about, however if you see a lot of bleeding please call Dr. Raphael. Unless directed otherwise, remove this dressing 2 days after surgery and place band-aids over the Steri-strips. After changing the dressing replace the compression stocking.

- Keep the compression stocking on at all times aside from showering until the first postoperative visit.

Washing & Bathing:

- You should be careful to keep the wound clean and dry for the first 48 hours after surgery.
- Beginning on the third day after surgery it is OK to shower as long as the incisions are kept dry with plastic wrap. Remove the wrap after showering and replace your compressive stocking.
- Do not take a bath until 2 weeks after surgery.
- Do not go into a pool, ocean or lake until 4 weeks after surgery

Ice & Activity:

- One important goal following surgery is to minimize swelling around your surgery site. The best way to achieve this is with the frequent application of ice. This is most important the first 48 hours following surgery. The ice pack should be large (like a big zip-lock bag) and held firmly on the area of your surgery. Apply for 15 minutes every hour if possible.
- You may put weight on the operated leg as tolerated, unless Dr. Raphael tells you otherwise after surgery.
- Do not place pillows under the operated knee as this can lead to stiffness.
- Place a towel roll under you ankle and tighten your thigh muscles to get your knee to straighten out. This is very important and should be done at least four times a day.
- Move your ankle back and forth many times during the day to help your circulation.
- You may return to sedentary work only or school in 3-4 days after surgery if your pain is tolerable.
- Avoid long distance traveling in cars or by airplane during the first week after surgery to avoid increasing your risk of developing blood clots.

Physical Therapy

- The goal of physical therapy is to first assess how your body responded to the surgical procedure. They help you feel comfortable with your surgery and make sure you aren't afraid to start doing things. Your therapist will start range of motion and strength exercises on your first visit. You will start physical therapy after your first post-operative visit.

Follow up appointment:

- We try to give all of our patients a follow-up office visit at the same time we schedule your surgery.
- Typically I want to see my patients in the office 5 to ten days after surgery.

FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENT: Please call our office to confirm your scheduled appointment.

What to watch out for:

- ∞ Pain that is increasing every hour in spite of the pain medication
- ∞ Drainage from the wound more than 2 days after surgery
- ∞ Increasing redness around the surgical site
- ∞ Pain or swelling around your surgery
- ∞ Fever greater than 101.5 degrees.

∞ Unable to keep food or water down for more than one day

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