

# orthoNY

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## Post-Operative Rehabilitation Guidelines for ACL Reconstruction

### WOUND CARE:

- Maintain your surgical dressing and loosen ACE-bandage if swelling of foot occurs or if too tight.
- Remove outer dressing on post operative day #1, keep steri-strips on (white band-aids).
- It is normal for some bleeding to occur, if blood soaks through the dressing do not be alarmed, reinforce with additional dressing.
- Keep surgical incisions clean and dry. Cover with plastic bag or Saran wrap for showering. DO NOT immerse the operative site.

### MEDICATIONS:

- If you have had a nerve block, it will wear off in several hours. Start taking the pain medication before the nerve block has lost its effectiveness.
- Take your narcotic pain medication only as needed and refer to directions on the bottle.
- Nausea and drowsiness are common side effects of narcotic medications, to decrease these effects, take medication with food.
- DO NOT drive, drink alcohol or take Tylenol products while taking narcotic pain medications.
- DO TAKE Ibuprofen 600mg (i.e. Motrin or Advil) in between taking narcotic pain medication. Take up to 600mg 3 times daily (1800mg daily). This will reduce swelling and decrease narcotic use.

#### ACTIVITY:

- Elevate the operative leg to chest level whenever possible to decrease swelling.
- Place pillows or blankets under operative leg to elevate the whole leg.
- Weight bear as tolerated, WHILE WEARING THE KNEE BRACE LOCKED IN EXTENSION. Discontinue crutches after 2-3 days (UNLESS instructed to not weight-bear on the leg, see meniscus repair).
- The knee brace should be worn and locked in full extension at all times (day and night- except to perform range of motion exercises or bathing)
- Avoid long periods of sitting (without leg elevated) or traveling long distances.

#### ICE THERAPY:

- Begin immediately after surgery. Use a large bag of ice every 2 hours for 20 minutes daily until the first post operative appointment.

#### EXERCISES:

- Begin exercises 24 hours after surgery (straight leg raise, heel slides, ankle pumps) unless instructed otherwise.
- Complete these exercises several times daily until the first post operative appointment. SEE ATTACHED EXERCISE INSTRUCTIONS SHEET.
- Formal physical therapy will start 8-12 days after surgery unless instructed otherwise.

#### EMERGENCIES (CALL THE OFFICE 453-9088 FOR THE FOLLOWING)

- Painful uncontrolled swelling or numbness
- Fever or chills (Fever over 101°F, it is common to have low grade fever for the first two days following surgery).
- Redness around incisions or color change in extremity.
- Continuous drainage or bleeding from incision site.
- Difficulty breathing or excessive nausea/vomiting.

\*If you have an emergency after office hours or on the weekend, contact the office at 518-453-9088 and you will be connected to our page service, which will page one of our on-call providers.

\*If you require immediate attention, go to the nearest Emergency Room.\*