

## **Post-Operative Instructions**

PROCEDURE: Knee Arthroscopy

PHYSICIAN: Matt Driscoll, MD

### **When to Call**

Notify Dr. Driscoll's office if any of the following symptoms occur:

- Temperature of 101°F or greater
- Color or temperature change in the affected extremity other than bruising
- Increased redness or drainage from your wounds (note, it *is normal* to see reddish/pink drainage on your dressing during the first 3-4 days following arthroscopic surgery as the surgical fluid drains out of the joint)
- Numbness or tingling in the affected extremity (after your nerve block wears off, if applicable)
- Increasing or unrelenting pain
- Calf pain, tenderness, or swelling
- Any other questions or concerns. We are here to help!

### **Pain**

- It is normal to have pain after surgery. Take your pain pills as needed as prescribed.
- Dr. Driscoll normally injects numbing medicine around the knee at the end of the procedure. This lasts 6-8 hours. If you notice more pain at around this time, that is normal. Take the pain medicine, rest, and ice the knee.
- Take pain medication with food to avoid nausea.
- You may gradually wean to Tylenol Extra Strength as needed. Most patients no longer regularly require the narcotic pain relievers after 1-2 weeks.

### **Diet**

- The medicines used for anesthesia can cause temporary nausea after surgery.
- We suggest that you begin light with clear liquids or soft foods (such as Jello®, pudding or yogurt) the first day after surgery to minimize upset stomach.
- Drink at least 6 to 8 glasses of water daily.
- If nausea persists after the first day, contact our clinic and we may prescribe a medication for this.

## **Compression Stockings**

- Wear stockings for two weeks to reduce your risk of blood clot.
- Remove to shower.
- May wash if needed.

## **Dressing Care**

- Keep your dressing clean and dry at all times.
- You may remove the bandages after 2 days. Replace them with clean gauze bandages or band-aids as needed for drainage or spotting.
- Do not remove the Steri-strips® (butterfly bandages). They will begin to fall off on their own after a few showers.

## **Icing**

- Ice helps minimize swelling, pain, and inflammation.
- Use an ice pack or cooling device as often as possible - at least 30 minutes, 4 times each day.
- Do not apply to bare skin. Use a towel or washcloth between ice and your skin.
- Cooling/icing units for the knee can be helpful after major knee surgery such as ligament reconstruction (ACL, etc) and meniscus repair. They help with pain and inflammation the first few days after surgery, reducing the need for narcotic pain medication. Unfortunately, they are not covered by insurance. They are available for purchase on Amazon for about \$160 (Search: Ossur Cold Rush Cold Therapy System).

## **Elevation**

- Elevate your leg on pillows so that it is above of the level of your heart. This helps to decrease swelling.

## **Weight-bearing**

- Weight bear only as directed by Dr. Driscoll. Precautions are different for each patient.
- Use your crutches for support.
- Call Dr. Driscoll's office if you have questions about weight bearing.

## **Bathing**

- For the first 2 days, sponge bathing is recommended.
- After 2 days you may resume normal showers. Let water run over your wounds but do not soak the wounds underwater in a bathtub, hot tub or swimming pool.

- Cleanse the wounds with soap and water. Do not scrub. Pat the wounds dry afterwards with a clean dry cloth. Allow them to dry open to air before re-applying a new bandage when necessary.
- Please do not apply any lotions, ointments, or gels to the wound.

### **Restrictions & Driving**

- Avoid making important decisions for 24-48 hours after surgery.
- NO alcohol for 24 hours or while taking pain medications.
- NO driving while taking prescription narcotic pain medication.
- NO driving after right knee arthroscopy until braking reaction time normalizes.
  - This is variable and depends on the patient and procedure performed, but is generally a *minimum* of 2 weeks.

### **Physical Therapy**

- Physical therapy may be recommended after your first post op visit.
- If it is, a prescription and therapy protocol will be provided at that visit.
- The therapists will follow the protocol you have been given for your specific injury and guide you in your recovery.

### **Post-op Appointment**

- You should have an appointment to see Dr. Driscoll within 10-14 days following your surgery.

*If you have any questions or concerns that are not addressed here, do not hesitate to call. We are here to help!*

Matthew D. Driscoll, M.D.

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