

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.
- If you received a nerve block injection before surgery, we recommend that you take your pain medication about 6-8 hours after your surgery to address pain that you may feel as the block begins to wear off.
- Take 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 5-7 days.

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 or pick at the Steri-strips® (butterfly bandages). They will begin to fall off on their own after 2-3 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 an ACE wrap or washcloth between ice and your skin.

Knee Brace

- You may have been provided with a knee brace to help support your leg after surgery.
- You are allowed to remove your brace only for the following activities:
 - Bathing
 - Dressing
 - Physical therapy (or home exercises if instructed to do so)
 - While at rest in a safe environment

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, cover the bandage in a plastic bag, plastic wrap (like Saran Wrap®) or sponge bathe only.
- After 2 days you may resume normal showers. Let water run over your wound but do not soak the wound 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 to dry open to air before re-wrapping in 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.
 - On average, this occurs after at least 4 weeks for arthroscopic partial meniscectomy and at least 6 weeks for ligament reconstruction (ie - ACL), but it may be longer for some patients.

Physical Therapy

- You will receive a list of simple knee exercises on the day of your surgery. You may begin these within 1-2 days of surgery when your pain allows.
- If have been given a prescription and protocol for physical therapy, please make an appointment to start your treatments about 5-7 days after surgery.
- 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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