

Surgery Instructions – Knee

After Surgery

***** All instructions & protocols can be found on my website *****

<http://www.patrickmcgahanmd.com/physical-therapy-pdfs.html>

- Post-operative Appointment
 - If you have not already made one, call my office to schedule your first appointment 1-2 weeks after surgery

- Pain Control
 - Pain medication will be given at your pre-operative appointment
 - Narcotics are used as needed
 - Anti-inflammatories can be started directly after surgery, can be taken regularly, and may continue for four weeks after surgery
 - For medication refills or changes,
 - For refills of medications, call your pharmacy or my office during office hours
 - For changes to medications, call my office during office hours
 - On-call physicians can NOT prescribe for patients they have not seen
 - Ice the knee 20 minutes per hour for the first 72 hours while awake
 - Be very careful when applying cold directly to the skin in limiting how much time it is used to avoid cold burns
 - If a cold therapy unit has been supplied, it is for home use.
 - After the first 72 hours, ice the knee at least 3 times a day and especially after physical therapy sessions
 - It will work through the dressings

- Dressings
 - Dressings can be taken off 72 hours after surgery
 - You can replace the dressings with band-aids
 - There may be drainage for the first 48 – 72 hours from the incisions. This is normal
 - You may take a shower 3 days post-op
 - Once the dressings are removed, you can use soap and water on the wounds
 - Do NOT take a bath or swim as the incisions should not be soaked in water for 4 weeks post-op
 - Keep the incisions clean and dry as much as possible

- Swelling & Tingling
 - It is normal to have some mild swelling, tingling, or numbness after surgery
 - Keep the leg elevated above the heart on several pillows when sitting or laying down
 - Sometimes the dressing might be too tight and can be re-wrapped, if necessary

Pain control:

- Ice 20 minutes, 3 times per day.
- Elevate extremity above heart as much as possible.
- Ibuprofen 800 mg every 8 hours as needed
- Norco 1-2 tablets every 6 hours as needed

- Physical Therapy
 - Physical therapy usually begins one week after surgery
 - If you have not already been given an appointment for physical therapy after surgery, please contact my office for a referral
 - My office will supply you with a prescription for your therapist
 - My physical therapy protocol can be downloaded from my website, or you can defer to the therapy protocol of your therapist
 - The type of surgery you have will determine what you can do after surgery
 - If a brace is placed on your leg following surgery,
 - You will use crutches and NOT put any weight on the leg until you talk to me at your first appointment, unless otherwise directed
 - You will NOT take off the brace (including when you sleep)
 - Except to shower or bathe, change clothes, or do your therapy

- What to Expect
 - Surgery to reconstruct an ACL or remove a torn meniscus (meniscectomy) or clean out (debridement):
 - Crutches as necessary
 - Usually for 4-7 days
 - You can walk as tolerated and when you feel ready
 - Physical therapy to start by 1st week after surgery
 - First goal is motion
 - Once full range of motion is achieved, strengthening is started
 - After meniscectomy or debridement, full sports and activities by 1-3 months
 - Swimming & stationary bicycle allowed by 2 weeks
 - After ACL reconstruction, full sports and activities with an ACL brace by 9 months
 - Stationary bicycle and swimming allowed according to progress
 - Surgery to repair a meniscus:
 - Brace immobilization locked in extension for 4-6 weeks
 - Weight bearing allowed with leg in extension at 4-6 weeks post-op
 - Physical therapy to start by 1st week after surgery
 - Begin range of motion exercises to prevent stiffness but no weight bearing on bent knee
 - Range only 0 – 90 degrees allowed
 - Remove brace by 6th week
 - Range of motion as tolerated
 - AVOID squatting
 - Begin full sports and activities by 6 months depending on progress
 - Surgery to reconstruct ACL & repair meniscus:
 - Brace immobilization with ROM as tolerated for 6 weeks
 - No weight bearing with crutches for 6 weeks
 - Begin physical therapy by 1st week (after surgery)
 - First goal is motion
 - Once full range of motion is achieved, strengthening is started
 - Full sports and activities with an ACL brace by 9 months
 - Stationary bicycle and swimming allowed by 10-12 weeks according to progress

Surgery Instructions – Pain Control

After Surgery

Pain Control:

1. Pain is worse the first 48-72 hours after surgery
2. Pain is often worse the day after surgery when a nerve block or local anesthesia wears off
3. Take your pain medicine on a regular, scheduled basis
4. Take the pain medication before the pain becomes severe, so that you “stay ahead of the pain.”
5. Ice 20 minutes, 3 times per day or use the cold therapy unit.
6. Elevate extremity above heart as much as possible.
7. Ibuprofen 800 mg every 8 hours as needed (as long as you can tolerate NSAIDS)
8. Norco (or other narcotic pain medication) 1-2 tablets every 6 hours as needed
9. Do not mix narcotic pain medication with alcohol or other sedative medication or sleep aids

Pain control: “STAY AHEAD OF THE PAIN”

- Ice 20 minutes, 3 times per day.
- Elevate extremity above heart as much as possible.
- Ibuprofen 800 mg every 8 hours as needed
- Norco 1-2 tablets every 6 hours as needed