



POST OPERATIVE PATIENT INFORMATION

Operative Arthroscopy of the Knee

Your operation was performed by arthroscopic methods. The interior of your joint was visualized with a small telescope. The diagnosis was established and appropriate surgery was performed with micro-instruments. It is most important to remember, that although the external incisions are small, the interior structures take six to eight weeks to heal and quiet down. Overuse of your knee during this period can compromise your results.

SWELLING: You can expect some swelling in the knee. The amount is variable, depending on individual circumstances. The swelling should diminish within several weeks.

ICE & ELEVATION: This is the **most important** for the first few days. This will keep swelling to a minimum. Ice bags can be made from plastic bags, but should not be applied directly to the knee. A towel between the ice bags and your skin is most helpful.

The entire leg should be elevated, not just the knee. The leg should be at or above the level of the heart.

DRESSING: A soft dressing has been applied to your knee. This compression dressing should be comfortable and absorb any leakage of fluid and/or blood. Although the dressing may become moist or blood stained, this is not usually a cause for alarm. We have not experienced any hemorrhage or excessive bleeding in our patients. If your dressing does become saturated with blood, you may reinforce it with extra dressing material.

- The dressing may be removed in **seventy-two (72)** hours and **shower**, do not bathe. You may apply the appropriate number of band-aids after shower as needed.
- Leave the dressing on until you return to the office. Do not get wet.

WOUNDS: The small points of entry may be sore and develop bruising over the next several days. This bruising will eventually disappear and does not require special care.

PAIN: You will receive a prescription for pain medication. It should be taken only as necessary. Please inform us of any known **DRUG ALLERGY**. If there is any reaction, discontinue the medication and inform our office. The application of an ice pack will decrease the swelling and discomfort in the first forty-eight hours. Please do not use aspirin, as it may increase bleeding in the first few days.

The sensation of “sloshing” of fluid in the joint is not cause for concern. It represents residual fluid from surgery which will absorb.

ACTIVITY: You may step on your surgical leg, **unless instructed otherwise by your surgeon.** Using your knee will decrease the swelling. Avoid overuse. Moving the foot and ankle up and down is also helpful to decrease swelling. You may bend and straighten your knee as soon as comfortable.

EXERCISES: Start the day of surgery unless instructed otherwise. Do 10 times a hour while awake. See other side for instructions.

NO BATHING, SWIMMING, SPA, LAKE, SOAKING OR SUBMERGING OPERATIVE SITE FOR 2 WEEKS OR UNTIL INCISION(S) HAVE HEALED.



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Relieving Pain and Swelling



Do not dangle your leg for long periods. Elevate above heart level to reduce swelling and pain. Ice your knee the first three days and then as needed for 30 minutes 3-4 times a day.

Exercising

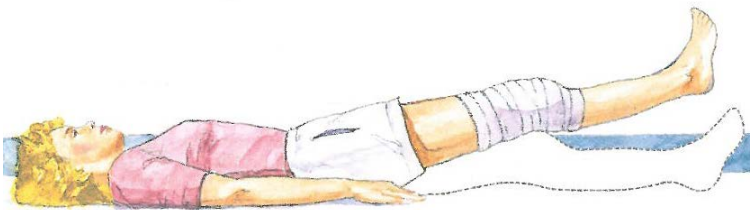
Building up your muscles that support your knee and improve joint mobility will speed your recovery. Do 10 per hour while awake.

Quadriceps exercise



Tighten your front thigh muscle (quadriceps) and press your knee toward the floor. Hold for 5-10 seconds, and then relax.

Straight leg raises



Lift your leg 5-6 inches keeping your knee straight. Hold for 5-10 seconds, lower slowly and relax.

Knee bends



Bend your knee by sliding your heel toward your hip as far as you can. Hold for 5-10 seconds, and then relax.