

Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) Reconstruction Preoperative and Postoperative Instruction

OMAR RAHMAN, MD, MBA

Orthopedic Surgeon | Sports Medicine

ARTHROSCOPIC SURGERY | JOINT RECONSTRUCTION



Name: _____

Date: _____

Diagnosis: _____

Date of Surgery: _____

Pre-Op Instructions

- Fill ALL prescriptions prior to surgery date but do not use these medications until after your surgery
- No Eating or Drinking after midnight on the night prior to surgery.
- Chlorhexidine scrub to surgical area on the night prior to surgery.
- Discontinue ALL aspirin products and Fish Oil supplements at least 7 days prior to surgery unless otherwise directed by myself or your primary care physician.
- Your 1st postoperative visit is typically scheduled 7-10 days after your surgery.
- A member of the Surgery Center will notify you of your arrival time the day before surgery.

Post-Op Instructions

- You will need someone to pick you up from the surgery center after your surgery.
- You will have a dressing on your knee overlying the surgical incisions. The bulky dressing may be removed 24 hours after your surgery and replaced with the one given to you by the surgery center. There are white butterfly “Steri-Strips” on the skin and these should stay on until you return to the doctor’s office.
- You can shower once the bulky dressing is removed and replaced with the one from the surgery center (new dressing is waterproof).
- You should be actively contracting your quadriceps muscle (squeezing your thigh muscle by pushing your knee straight) – this should be done as much as you possibly can.
- You should be trying to actively raise your leg straight in the air (while sitting down or lying down) – this can be done initially with the brace on but should be done with the brace off if possible.
- The brace will stay in the “locked” position (straight) until you return to see me.
- You should sleep with a pillow under the **HEEL** (not the knee) to help with keeping the knee straight – this should be done for the entirety of the brace wear.
- You can put down as much weight as possible on your foot – unless specifically instructed not to do so if you have additional procedures besides the ACL reconstruction (ex. **Meniscal repair or cartilage procedure**).
- You will sleep with the brace locked in extension for 4 weeks.
- **Ice**
 - An ice machine will be provided to you prior to your surgery. This will help decrease swelling and pain after surgery. You can begin to use the ice machine immediately after the surgery. Use the ice machine as much as possible at intervals of 30 minutes on and

off. You should keep the ice machine for approximately 2 weeks. Do not use the ice machine while you are sleeping.

- If you are not using an ice machine, apply ice to the surgical site 4 to 6 times daily for no longer than 20 minutes at a time.

- **Medications**

- If you were given a nerve block for anesthesia, it will wear off over 18-24 hours. During this time you will have little to no feeling in the body part where you had surgery. To control your pain during this transition while the nerve block is wearing off, eat first and then take a **long acting pain medication** (ex. Oxycontin). This should be repeated every 12 hours afterwards until the medication is completed. **Short acting pain medications** (ex. Vicodin, Percocet, Norco) can be taken in addition to the long acting medications on an as needed basis and can be repeated every 4-6 hours as needed. Do not take Acetaminophen (ex. Tylenol) in addition to short acting pain medications (these medications contain acetaminophen).
- Do not wait for the nerve block to wear off before beginning pain medication as this may make pain control difficult.
- The day of surgery, begin taking Celebrex 200mg by mouth two times a day for 2 weeks. This medication will help cut down the use of the short acting narcotic-based pain medication. If your insurance does not cover Celebrex, take Ibuprofen 600mg (ex. Advil, Motrin) every 6 hours to help with the inflammation and pain.
- However, if you still have pain after taking the ibuprofen, continue taking the pain medication every 4-6 hours as needed.

- **Continuous Passive Motion (CPM) Machine**

- A continuous passive motion (CPM) machine will be provided to you prior to your surgery. This will help preserve the range of motion of the body part which was operated on and helps with postoperative swelling. CPM use should be initiated on the day of surgery unless otherwise directed. Start from 0° to 40° and increase 10° per day as tolerated to a maximum of 110°. The CPM should be used in 1 to 2 hour sessions for a total of 8 hours daily.

- **Kneehab Quadriceps Therapy System**

- Start therapy on postoperative day 3.
- Therapy consists of three 20 minute sessions daily.
- Contract your quadriceps muscles in sync with the stimulator during treatment.