



## POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

### Post Operative ACL Reconstruction Surgery Instructions

*After undergoing arthroscopic surgery you may have several questions as to what to expect. The following are categories under which the majority of these questions will fall. Please read them carefully as they will address many concerns you may have and provide you with an idea of what you can expect in the next days.*

*The exercises contained in this guide are designed to help you safely regain strength and mobility.*

*If you develop any fever (101°F or above), unexpected pain, redness, or swelling, please contact the office for instructions.*

*In most cases, an office visit is scheduled one week after surgery. Please contact the office for an appointment.*

#### **Pain**

There will be some discomfort in your knee following surgery. This is normal and to be expected. You will be given a prescription for pain relief upon discharge that you should take accordingly. You may also note some swelling or puffiness around your knee. This is also to be expected. Elevation of your knee above the level of your heart will minimize swelling and pain. You should elevate your knee whenever you are sitting or lying down.

Secondly, we find that applying ice (ice bag or gel pack) will help limit swelling and decrease your pain. The optimum ice time is 20-25 minutes with the ice on and 60 minutes with the ice off. The greater the frequency, the greater the pain relief and the less the swelling. Please refrain from using any heat on your knee. If you have any calf pain, call us immediately.

#### **Dressings**

You will be sent home with a bulky bandage/dressing that you can keep on for 24-72 hours.

When performing your first dressing change, remove the bulky dressing, cleanse the wounds with an antiseptic, and re-dress the wounds using band-aids. If you have “steri-strips” on the wounds, please try to keep the strips intact. Do not remove them until instructed by your doctor.

You may wear an elastic bandage loosely over the knee. This will help in reducing swelling. If you note excessive bleeding, please give us a call.

#### **Bathing**

You may shower 72 hours after your surgery unless directed otherwise by your doctor. Dry your knee thoroughly and apply new band-aids. DO NOT bathe, swim, or immerse your knee in a hot tub or whirlpool.

#### **Activity**

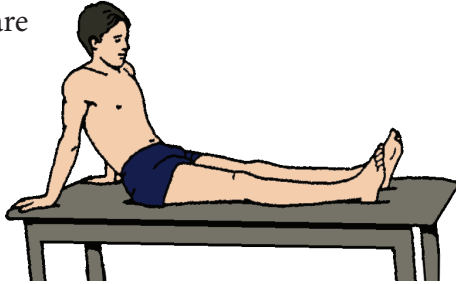
You may step on your affected leg when comfort permits. Crutches are used to assist you during your first week. The rule of thumb is to let pain be your guide. Your physician may give you other instructions.

#### **Exercises**

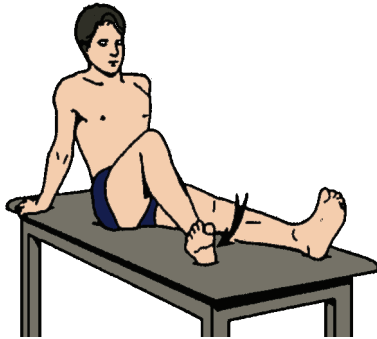
There are three basic exercises that you should begin the day after your surgery. This is to maintain the strength of the leg muscles which is lost during immobility. The exercises should be performed with both legs and preceded and followed by a 20-25 minute session of icing. Icing before and after exercise will limit the pain and swelling. Do these daily.

CONTINUED ON BACK

- **QUAD SETS:** While sitting with a towel underneath the back of your knee, tighten the thigh muscle as much as you can. Hold this tightness for 5 seconds, relax, and repeat this 20 times per hour while you are awake.

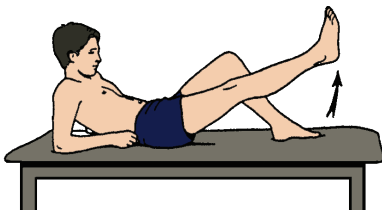


- **HAMSTRING SETS:** Bend your knee to 45 degrees and place the heel of your foot on the floor or table. Bring your toes up (towards your nose) and push your heel down as hard as you can while simultaneously pulling your foot towards your body. Hold this contraction for 5 seconds, repeat 20 times every hour you are awake.

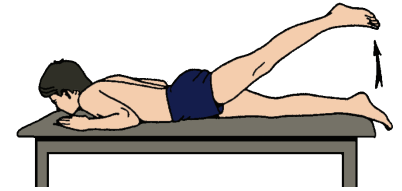


- **STRAIGHT LEG RAISES:** Straight leg raises are performed in the following four positions: on your back (A), on your stomach (B), and lying on each side (C&D). See the following:

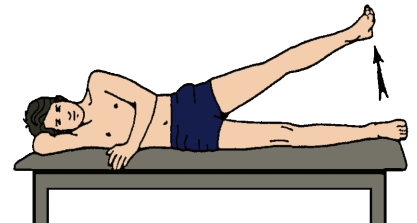
- A. Lie on your back, keeping your leg straight. Slowly raise your extended leg about 6-10 inches on a 4-second count. Lower on an 8-second count. Repeat with 3 sets of 15-25 repetitions.



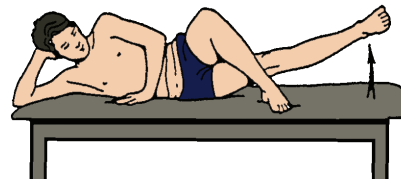
- B. Lie on your stomach, keeping your leg straight. Slowly raise your leg back 6-10 inches on a 4-second count. Lower on an 8-second count. Repeat with 3 sets of 15-25 repetitions.



- C. Lie on your unaffected (non-surgical) side and raise your outside leg 6-10 inches on a 4-second count. Lower on an 8-second count. Repeat with 3 sets of 15-25 repetitions.



- D. Lie on your affected (surgical) side. Have someone hold your outside leg or prop it on a chair or stool. Raise the surgical leg about 6-10 inches on a 4-second count. Lower on an 8-second count. Repeat with 3 sets of 15-25 repetitions. As you feel comfortable, increase the number of repetitions.



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