



## INSTRUCTIONS AFTER KNEE SURGERY

### 1. **BRACE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW HAS BEEN CIRCLED FOR YOU:**

- a. NO BRACE GIVEN
- b. Leave brace on until your follow up appointment. You may loosen if needed.
- c. You only need to wear your brace while you are walking.

### 2. **PUTTING WEIGHT ON YOUR LEG:**

- a. You may place as much weight as you can tolerate on the leg and use crutches or a walker if needed. You may wean yourself from the crutches, as you are able to get around without a limp.

**OR**

- b. You must use crutches and NOT place any weight on leg for \_\_\_\_ weeks.

### 3. **ICE:     **Bag of Ice OR Cryocuff****

- a. Apply over the knee bandage 30 Minutes on and 30 minutes off while you are awake until your follow up appointment
- b. Apply continuously while awake for \_\_\_\_\_ days.

### 4. **BANDAGES:** Leave the dressing in place over the knee for \_\_\_\_**days or Until Follow-up Appointment.** Afterwards you may apply clean gauzes or band-aids over the incisions. If you have Steri-Strips (paper tape covering an incision) leave these in place. You may loosen the knee dressings if they feel too tight. **Do not apply Neosporin!**

### 5. **SHOWERING:**

- a. You **MAY NOT** shower until follow-up appointment

**OR**

- b. You **MAY** shower after \_\_\_\_ **days**. Apply clean bandages over the incision after showering. **Do NOT take a bath; get into a pool or hot tub for 2 weeks after surgery!**
  - c. You **MAY** shower but keep bandages on.
  
- 6. **PAIN PILLS:** For the ***first 24 hours*** take your pain pills on a regular schedule as noted on the medicine bottle. Knee injections given during surgery typically wear off 4-6 hours after surgery and will be associated with increasing pain at that time. This is normal.
  
- 7. **PRESCRIPTIONS YOU WILL BE GIVEN:**
  - a. Lortab (hydrocodone + acetaminophen) for pain unless you are allergic. Acetaminophen is the medicine contained in Tylenol therefore you should **not** take Tylenol with Lortab.
  - b. Promethazine HCl for nausea if it occurs
  
- 8. **OTHER MEDICINES YOU SHOULD TAKE:** If you are **NOT** allergic to Ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil, Aleve, Naprosyn, etc.), **you may** take these with your pain medication to further help with pain and to reduce inflammation.
  
- 9. **COMMON SIDE EFFECTS AFTER SURGERY:**
  - a. **Drowsiness, lightheadedness, and nausea** may result from the pain medication
  - b. **PAIN** - You need to be as comfortable as possible, **but also understand that no amount of pain medication, ice, and rest will completely remove the pain after surgery**
  - c. **Constipation** can be caused by pain medication. Increase your fluid intake, drink fruit juices and take an over the counter stool softener if necessary for constipation. If it persists contact your primary care doctor

- d. **Swelling** and **stiffness** about the knee are expected for the first several weeks following your surgery. Continuing to ice, use anti inflammatories, and doing the exercises provided will help this.
- e. **Mild itching** can occur as a result of pain medicines. You may try some Benadryl.

10. **SIDE EFFECTS THAT SHOULD NOT BE IGNORED:** Difficulty breathing, a severe rash, extreme drowsiness, and nausea that is uncontrolled with Phenergan. If your side effect is life threatening, call 911, if it is not life threatening, contact our office or go to the emergency room for further instruction.

11. **YOUR FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT:** An appointment card will be given to you the day of surgery. If you need to confirm or change the appointment time, please contact the office at (804) 452-1635.

12. **PHYSICAL THERAPY APPOINTMENTS:** Please make sure you are dressed appropriately for your physical therapy appointments. It is important to wear tennis shoes and shorts so the physical therapist can work with you.

13. **BLOOD CLOT PREVENTION:**

- a. Pumping your ankles (bringing your toes toward your chest and pushing down like you would on a gas pedal) is another important exercise to do. You need to do hourly while awake for \_\_\_\_\_ days to keep blood circulating and prevent a blood clot.
- b. Take one Aspirin (325 mg) daily for two weeks

14. **YOU SHOULD CALL THE OFFICE AT (804) 452-1635 IF:** you notice that your bandages are completely saturated with blood, if you have a temperature above 101 degrees, if you have pain that is not “controlled” with pain medication and ice, if your toes are cold, numb or purple, or if you have any other concerns or questions. **Some blood on the bandages is okay, however, persistent**

bleeding is not normal. Many patients will have an elevated temperature for the first few days after surgery. However, a temperature above 101 degrees is not normal, especially if associated with chills or severe pain. The pain medication and ice should help to “control” your pain, however, it will NOT take away all of the pain. Your foot may swell or feel cool because you are lying around without moving the leg. It should become warmer as you move around more. A purple, cold, numb foot that does not get better with movement or loosening the bandages is NOT normal.

15. DO NOT operate heavy machinery, drive an automobile or make important decisions while under the influence of anesthesia for at least 24 to 48 hours after surgery or while taking pain medications. You may resume driving when you feel you can do so safely.
16. The following illustrations demonstrate the very important exercises you will begin the day of surgery. They are crucial to your rehabilitation.

Elevate your affected leg, it must be elevated above heart level, usually requiring 4 or 5 pillows under your leg. Just propping it on the couch, or recliner is not enough, and the more you can elevate and ice, the less pain and swelling you will have.





**Tighten this muscles and hold for 2 seconds, twenty times, and do 2 or more sessions each day. Monitor your progress by comparing your muscle contraction to your unaffected leg, and it is wise to do these exercises for both legs.**



**Heel Prop**

**This Is The Most Important Exercise You Will Do!!**

Prop your heel as shown in the photo above, and relax your leg (when you are relaxed, your leg and foot will rotate out slightly and this is good) Allow your knee to straighten as much as possible, this can also be achieved by propping your heel in a chair facing you, or on the arm of the couch, as long as nothing is beneath your leg. Do this often, getting your knee straight is most important!!!

**Prop your unaffected knee up, and note how straight that knee will go, this is how you can monitor your progress, and work to get your surgical knee as straight.**

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Patient Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_