

Patient Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Date of Surgery: _____

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOLLOWING ACL RECONSTRUCTION SURGERY

Please note that the instructions provided below are general guidelines to be followed. However, any written or verbal instructions provided by your surgeon supersede the instructions below and should be followed.

WHEN CAN I REMOVE THE BRACE?

The brace can be removed for showering, using the bathroom, changing clothes, doing your exercises with physical therapy and applying ice. Other than the following exceptions, you must wear the brace at all times. You will have to sleep with the brace on for the several weeks following surgery.

IS IT BETTER TO HAVE A MENISCAL REPAIR OR PARTIAL MENISCECTOMY?

Both of these surgeries are very common for orthopedic knee injuries and both procedures serve to improve your activities of daily living. The decision is made based on location of the injury and its severity as opposed to your doctor's preference.

WHEN CAN I RETURN TO WORK?

This depends on the demands of your job (labor vs. desk job). Desk jobs may return to work within 7-10 days and labor intensive jobs typically around 3 months.

WHEN CAN I BEGIN DRIVING?

RIGHT KNEE: 6-8 weeks after surgery
LEFT KNEE: As soon as you are no longer taking narcotic pain pills

WHEN CAN I FLY?

You may not fly for 6 weeks after your surgery depending on distance traveling (ask your doctor). This is to prevent post-operative complications such as DVT (blood clot). When you do fly, it is important that you take aspirin before your flight and perform ankle pumps frequently. You should also get up and move around the plane as frequently as possible (about every 60-90 minutes).

WHAT CAN I EAT AFTER SURGERY?

Gradually resume a regular diet starting with liquids and advance as tolerated. Try simple foods that are easy for your body to digest such as bananas or toast.



WHEN SHOULD I START PHYSICAL THERAPY?

You should begin physical therapy within a week after your surgery. However, you should schedule your first physical therapy appointment **BEFORE** your actual surgery to assure you have a reservation.

HOW LONG WILL I HAVE PHYSICAL THERAPY AFTER THE SURGERY?

Each individual session will vary between 45 minutes to an hour and a half. The typical therapy program will be a minimum of 6 months. The first phase of therapy is designed to safely regain your range of motion and quadriceps muscle function while the second phase of therapy will be directed at regaining strength, endurance and eventually a return to sport program.

HOW MUCH PAIN WILL I HAVE?

This is variable, of course, but we provide you with an appropriate amount of narcotic pills to keep you comfortable until your first post-operative visit. You should take these pills as needed. You can take 1 pill every 6 hours as needed.

WHEN SHOULD I CALL THE OFFICE WITH CONCERNS?

Any signs of infection should be reported immediately — these include increased drainage (usually thick, cloudy, not liquid secondary to the arthroscopy), redness, increased warmth, and fever.

WILL I NEED AN X-RAY OR MRI AFTER MY SURGERY?

Yes. At the 6-week post-operative visit we ask that you get new X-Ray images to look at the healing and placement of the new graft.

DO I NEED THE CRYOCUFF?

Studies have shown that cryotherapy contributes to speeding up the time of recovery. While a Cryocuff is not a mandatory purchase, the unit is capable of consistently providing patient relief and decreasing the amount of narcotics that the patient needs to take.

WHEN CAN I SHOWER AFTER SURGERY?

To protect your incisions, you are not allowed to shower until 3 days after your surgery. In the shower do not scrub around the incision site. When you are finished, pat dry the area delicately. **NO BATHS, HOT TUBS OR POOLS UNTIL 6 WEEKS AFTER SURGERY.**

WHAT IF MY STERI-STRIPS FALL OFF BEFORE MY FIRST POST-OPERATIVE APPOINTMENT?

This is okay. The adhesive of the steri-strips can fail quickly. You can cover up the incision sites with a regular or water-proof band aid. You will be given a new set of steri-strips at your first post-operative appointment as an additional precaution.