

Arthroscopic Anterior Cruciate Reconstruction Post Operative Care Instructions Dr. Tarlow – Advanced Knee Care, PC

You will go home the day of surgery with an ace wrap on your knee. You will be sent home with a narcotic pain reliever. If you experience nausea/vomiting for more than 24 hours after surgery it is likely due to the pain reliever. Phone our office for a new prescription. Please phone during business hours for prescription refills. Prescriptions will not be filled after hours or on weekends.

Activities: Limited for 48 hours after surgery, be sure to rest. Do not drive, operate machinery or power tools, drink alcohol or make important decisions or sign legal documents due to surgery and general anesthesia. Elevate foot and leg for 24-48 hours. Flex foot and ankle to decrease swelling.

Shower: Remove dressings (leave steri strips if present), wash knee incisions, dry incisions/apply dry band-aid and ace 48 hours after surgery. Use of ace wrap after 2 days is optional.

Follow-up appointment: Usually scheduled for 1 week after surgery. Call our office (480-483-0393) if you are unsure of your appointment time.

Crutches: (Full weight bearing) for 3-14 days. Stop crutches when able to walk comfortably and you have good leg muscle control.

Brace: May or may not be used – If used, Lock straight for 2 days, then open hinges 0-90 and use brace until leg strong-usually for total of 2-5 days. Remove while sleeping after 2nd night.

Exercises: SLR (straight leg raises) and knee range of motion (ROM) 25 reps twice daily beginning immediately postop. Start exercise bike on 7-14 day postop for 15 minutes. Return to normal activities expected 6-12 months depending on type of ACL graft, rehab progress and commitment. More detailed instructions from Dr. T./physical therapist.

Ice: Knee swelling is expected and is diminished with Ice pack to the knee/lower leg for 20 minutes four times daily for 3-14 days.

Swelling and bleeding: Some bleeding through dressing in first 48 hours may occur. Swelling is normal. Lower leg/foot/ankle may turn greenish/yellow with black stripes around ankle from the blood traveling under skin and down leg 3-14 days after surgery. Lower leg throbbing on standing also can occur. This is normal.

Physical therapy: You have the option of attending formal PT (office will direct you to trusted professional) or directing your own recovery with home and gym workouts. Physical therapy usually begins after 3-5 days post op when you can comfortably travel out of the house and continues for several months.

Driving: May drive 5-10 days following surgery as long as narcotic pain relievers are not being used. Common sense dictates safe return to driving.

Off Work: Usually 5-10 days if desk type work, 3-4 months for construction type work.

If you experience the following symptoms call our office as soon as possible (480-483-0393). These may be signs of infection or deep venous thrombosis.

- Severe pain with fever greater than 102 F.
- Limited knee range of motion.
- Calf or thigh pain that is consistent and does not go away.
- Trouble/pain with breathing/chest pain/shortness of breath.

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