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/Post Op Hinged Brace on your knee. If you experience nausea/vomiting for more than 24 hours after surgery it is likely due to the pain reliever. We like to help you during working hours so please phone during business hours for prescription refills/changes. We like to have fun when not at work so expect a return call for refill/change requests made after hours/weekends/holidays on the next business day.

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

- Severe knee pain with fever greater than 102 F.
- Diminishing knee motion with progressive severe knee pain.
- Calf or thigh pain that is constant and does not go away with elevation/rest.
- Trouble/pain with breathing or chest pain/shortness of breath-best to phone 911.

Phone/Answering Service: 480-483-0393  
Direct Scheduling Line: 480-225-2343  
Rachael 480-440-6557 or Mishelle 480-440-6532 during office hours  
Website: www.tarlowknee.com  
Blog: www.tarlowmd.blogspot.com  
E-mail: for Dr. Tarlow - doctlow@cox.net

Activities: Limited for 72 hours after surgery; be sure to divide your time between resting/leg elevation and standing/walking periodically those first 3 days. General anesthesia effects persist for 24 hours; Do not drive, operate machinery/tools, drink alcohol or make important decisions or sign legal documents for one day.

Shower: Remove dressings on second day after surgery. Leave sutures/staples, wash knee incisions, and dry incisions. Application of band-aid/gauze and ace 48 hours after surgery is optional.

Follow-up appointment: Usually scheduled for 7-10 days after surgery. Our staff will phone you to confirm appointment. Call our office (480-483-0393) with questions.
**Crutches:** Partial weight bearing (1/4 to 1/2 body weight) for 7-10 days. Stop crutches after 7-10 days when able to walk comfortably and you have good leg muscle control.

**Brace:** Post Op hinged brace will be used - Placed on knee in Surgery. Lock straight for 2 days, then open hinges 0-90 (click off lock on each hinge) and use brace until leg strong-usually for total of 7-10 days. Remove while sleeping after 2nd night. We will attempt to prior authorize brace coverage with your insurance carrier.

**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 and pain is expected. Purchase Ice packs or gel packs and apply to the knee/lower leg for 20 minutes four-six times daily for up to 3 weeks.

**Chemical Prophylaxis against DVT/PE:** Use Aspirin 325 mg orally twice daily for 14 days starting 8am day after discharge. Get up frequently, pump ankles while at rest.

**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 3-7 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, 1-4 months for construction type work.

**Return to Sport:** Range is 6-24 months, with or without sports brace depending on a multitude of factors. Please discuss your specific situation with Dr. T.