



Postoperative Care Instructions

Total Knee Arthroplasty/ MAKO Partial Knee Arthroplasty

Main Office Number (answering service at night): 480-483-0393

Medical Assistants (during office hours): Mishelle 480-440-6532 or Rachael
480-440-6557

Direct Scheduling Line: 480-225-2343

Website: www.tarlowknee.com

Blog: www.tarlowmd.blogspot.com

Email: doctlow@cox.net

*Please call during office hours for prescription refills/changes. We will return after hours/
weekend/holiday calls for non-urgent matters on the next business day.*

IF YOU EXPERIENCE THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS OF INFECTION OR BLOOD CLOT, PLEASE GO THE CLOSEST EMERGENCY ROOM ASAP:

- CHEST PAIN OR SHORTNESS OF BREATH.
- CALF OR THIGH PAIN THAT IS CONSTANT AND DOES NOT GO AWAY WITH REST,
ELEVATION OR STRETCHING.
- SEVERE KNEE PAIN, FEVER >102, UNUSUAL DRAINAGE FROM INCISION

ACTIVITY:

- Limited activity for 3 days—NO strenuous activity. Rest and keep your leg elevated but you must stand/walk periodically to prevent blood clots.
- The effects of the anesthesia can last for 24 hours, so move slowly.
- No driving, drinking alcohol, or making important decisions for the next 24 hours or while you are taking opioid pain medication.

WALKING:

- You may put full weight on your operative leg using a cane or walker for 1-2 weeks after surgery. Then walk freely based on your confidence and performance level (good leg muscle and pain control).

DRESSING CARE AND SHOWERING:

- Leave the surgical dressing on for two days. Remove all bandages on 2nd day. Gently wash your incision/skin staples with soapy water and pat dry with a clean towel. It is optional to place a clean band aid or gauze/ace wrap after 2 days.
- Do not get in bathtubs, hot tubs, or swimming pools for 3 weeks.

SWELLING and ICING YOUR KNEE FOR THE NEXT 3 WEEKS

- You will be provided with an ice wrap at the surgery center to use for 60 MINS FOUR TIMES PER DAY FOR UP TO 3 WEEKS. DO NOT keep ice on your knee for longer than 60mins 4x/ day. DO NOT walk in your ice wrap.
- Leg swelling is usually more than patients anticipate and usually maximizes 7-14 days after surgery. You may have lower leg throbbing with standing.

BRUISING

- You may have bruising from your thigh, around your knee and into your foot and toes for about the next 3-14 days.

PAIN

- The nerve block prior to your surgery will help control your pain for up to 36 hrs.

- You will be given a prescription for strong pain medicine before you leave the surgery center. Stay ahead of your pain for the first 3 days.
- Opioid pain medications can cause constipation. Drink lots of fluids and eat a high fiber diet. Use a stool softener or laxative for severe constipation.

BLOOD CLOT PREVENTION FOR 4 WEEKS AFTER SURGERY

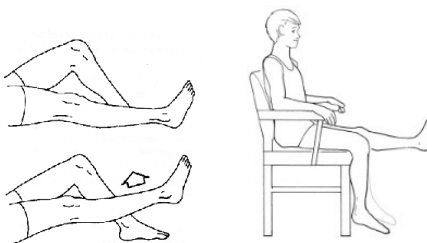
- **VENAFLOW CALF COMPRESSION DEVICES FOR 4 WEEKS:** These devices squeeze your calves (like your calves would normally squeeze with walking) to help push the blood out of the calf so the blood does not pool and result in a blood clot.
 - ❖ Wrap calf sleeves around BOTH lower legs AT NIGHT WHILE SLEEPING and During prolonged periods of inactivity (watching a movie, computer work, car trip, etc.)
 - ❖ You will use these for 4 WEEKS.
 - ❖ Do not walk while using your devices.
 - ❖ If your unit malfunctions, please call Rachael and Mishelle at the office for a replacement pair.
- **ASPRIN 325mg TWICE DAILY FOR 2 WEEKS:**
 - ❖ Aspirin 325mg by mouth—one pill in the morning and one pill at night for at least 2 weeks STARTING AT 8AM THE MORNING AFTER YOUR SURGERY.

HINGED KNEE BRACE USED FOR 3 WEEKS AFTER SURGERY

- A hinged knee brace is placed during surgery. The hinges are not locked so you have full range of motion of your knee to walk and do your exercises (see below).
- You will wear the brace for a total of 3 weeks after surgery:
 - ❖ Day 1-7: Wear brace DAY AND NIGHT except when showering.
 - ❖ Day 7-21: use brace only when WALKING (remove hinges).

EXERCISES AND PHYSICAL THERAPY (1st PT APPT ONE WEEK AFTER SURGERY)

- Formal physical therapy is not mandatory, but may result in a more complete and speedier recovery.
- There is a list of preferred physical therapists on Dr. Tarlow's website at <https://tarlowknee.com/office/preferred-outpatient-physical-therapy-facilities/>
- Your first physical therapy appointment should be scheduled for about ONE WEEK after surgery.
- **Beginning on the day of surgery** do 25 reps of straight leg raises and knee range of motion exercises twice daily.



DRIVING AND RETURN TO WORK

- You may drive as long as opioid pain relievers are not being used---typically 1-3 weeks.
- Return to work for MAKO partial knee replacement 1-4 weeks and for total knee replacement 1-3 months.

BODY CHANGES

- You may have a poor appetite (related to surgery, fatigue, opioid pain medication). Try taking a multivitamin and 500mg Vitamin C daily for a month to help.
- You may also have difficulty sleeping for 2-3 months. Call the office for prescription medication if needed.