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.

**Office Phone/Answering Service: 480-483-0393**
Mishelle 480-440-6557 during office hours
Website: [www.tarlowknee.com](http://www.tarlowknee.com)
E-mail: [for Dr. Tarlow: doctlow@gmail.com](mailto:doctlow@gmail.com)

**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 (leave Clear OpSite and tan colored JumpStart for 3-7 days), wash knee and reapply ace 24 hours after surgery. Use of ace wrap after 3 days 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.

**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 81 mg orally twice daily for 21 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.