



Orthopaedic Associates of Zanesville
Post-Op Instructions ACL Reconstruction
Dr. Brautigam

Please note that these instructions are general guidelines to be followed; however, any written or verbal instructions provided by your provider supersede the instructions below and should be followed

WOUND CARE

- Maintain your operative dressing, loosen bandage if swelling of the foot and ankle occurs
- It is normal for the knee to bleed and swell following surgery. If blood soaks onto the ACE bandage, do not become alarmed, reinforce with additional dressing.
- You can remove your surgical dressing 48 hours after surgery. Begin by removing the tape and all of the bulky padding then apply gauze and paper tape over the portal sites. You can also use Band-Aids instead.
- Change once per day until you return to our office for your first post-operative visit.
- You can shower 48 hours after surgery. Do not saturate or get the incision submerged in a bathtub, pool, or Jacuzzi or hot-tub.
- Please do not place any ointments lotions or creams directly over the incisions.
- NO immersion in a bath until given approval by our office.

MEDICATIONS

- Local anesthetics are injected into the wound at the time of surgery. This will wear off within 8-12 hours and it is not uncommon for patients to encounter more pain on the first or second day after surgery when swelling peaks.
- Most patients will require some narcotic pain medication for a short period of time – this can be taken as per directions on the bottle.
- Common side effects of the pain medication are nausea, drowsiness, and constipation. To decrease the side effects, take the medication with food. If constipation occurs, consider taking an over the counter laxative
- If you are having problems with nausea and vomiting, contact the office to possibly have your medications changed.
- Do not drive a car or operate machinery while taking the narcotic medication.
- If you are having pain that is not being controlled by the pain medication prescribed, you may take an over the counter anti-inflammatory medication such as ibuprofen or naproxen in between doses of pain medication. This will help to decrease pain and decrease the amount of narcotic medication required. Please take as directed on the bottle

ACTIVITY

- Elevate the operative leg to chest level whenever possible to decrease swelling.
- Do not place pillows under knees (i.e. do not maintain knee in a flexed or bent position), but rather place pillows under the foot/ankle.
- Use crutches to assist with walking. You are able to bear as much weight as tolerated on your operative leg unless otherwise instructed. **If you had a meniscus repair you are toe touch weightbearing with crutches for 2-4 weeks.**
- You must weight bear with the brace locked in full extension after surgery. Do not walk without your brace on.
- Do not engage in activities which increase knee pain/swelling (prolonged periods of standing or walking) for the first 7-10 days following surgery.
- Avoid long periods of sitting (without leg elevated) or long distance traveling for 2 weeks.
- NO driving until instructed otherwise by physician

EXERCISE

- Begin exercises 24 hours after surgery (straight leg raises, quad sets, heel slides, and ankle pumps) unless

otherwise instructed.

- Discomfort and knee stiffness are normal for a few days following surgery. It is safe to bend your knee in a non-weightbearing position when performing exercises unless otherwise instructed.
- Complete exercises 3-4 times daily until your first post-operative visit – your motion goals are to have complete extension (straightening) and 90 degrees of flexion (bending) at your first post-operative appointment unless otherwise instructed.
- Perform ankle pumps continuously throughout the day to reduce the risk of developing a blood clot in your calf.
- If formal physical therapy (PT) is needed, it is typically arranged prior to your surgery date. It generally begins several days after your surgery date unless your provider has stated otherwise. If you are unsure of this please call the office at 740-454-3273 to receive instructions for starting therapy.

BRACE

- Your brace should be worn fully extended (straight) at all times (day and night – except for exercises) until otherwise instructed after the first post-operative visit.
- Remove brace for flexion (bending) and other exercises done in a non-weight bearing position (i.e. Lying or sitting).

ICE THERAPY

- Icing is very important in the initial post-operative period and should begin immediately after surgery.
- Use icing machine continuously or ice packs (if machine not prescribed) for 20 minutes every 2 hours daily until your first post-operative visit – remember to keep leg elevated to level of chest while icing. Care should be taken with icing to avoid frostbite to the skin.

EMERGENCIES

- With any surgery it is important to be aware of any signs of infection, which can include: unusual looking or smelling drainage (green/yellow), increased redness and tenderness around the incision site, or fever (i.e. 101 degrees or above) and chills. Also, be aware of excessive bleeding or continued numbness and tingling. If you experience any of these symptoms, please call our office. There is a doctor on call 24 hours a day.

FOLLOW-UP CARE/QUESTIONS

- If you do not already have a post-operative appointment scheduled, please contact our office at 740-454-3273 to schedule.
- Typically, the first post-operative appointment following surgery is 10-14 days following surgery. If you have any further questions please contact us during office hours.

EXERCISES AND MOBILITY

The following pages contain a list of basic exercises and activities that you will be performing following your knee surgery. These activities are vital in helping you return to your normal activities and are designed to help increase leg strength, flexibility and function.

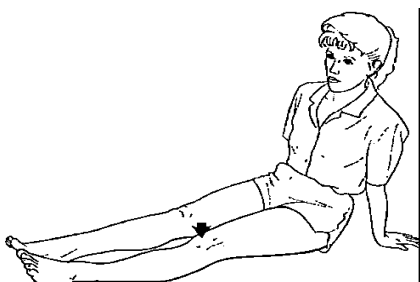
As a general rule, exercises should be performed three times a day. Do not add weights or other resistance to these exercises for at least six weeks after surgery.

Phase I: Begin these exercises the first day after surgery.

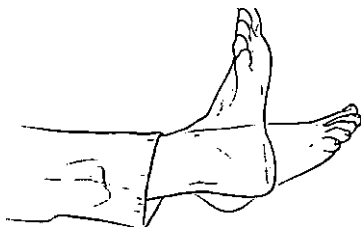
Heel Slides: Lie on your back with both legs straight, or sit in a chair with legs bent and feet on the floor. Slide your heel toward your buttock, bending the knee as far as you can. Slide your heel back to the starting position. Repeat up to 10 times, at least 3 times each day. You can do this exercise while lying down or sitting in a chair.



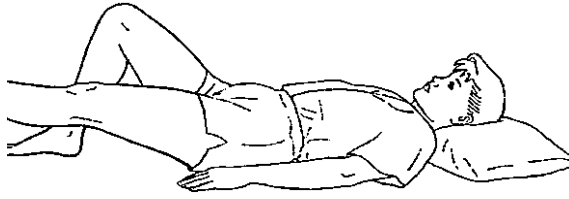
Quad Sets: To achieve a fully straight knee and to improve quadriceps strength, lie with your leg straight and toes pointed toward the ceiling. Tighten the muscle on the top of your thigh, keeping your thigh on the bed while attempting to raise your heel slightly off the bed. Hold your muscles tight for ten seconds. Perform 2 sets of 10 repetitions.



Ankle Pumps: To promote circulation and to decrease swelling postoperatively, in bed or sitting in a chair, point your toes up, down, left and right. Perform 2 sets of 10 repetitions.



Straight Leg Raises: To promote quadriceps strength, lie on your back and bend your uninvolved knee to a comfortable position. Tighten your thigh muscle to straighten your operated knee and raise your leg until your thighs are parallel, hold 3 seconds. Slowly lower your leg. Only perform this exercise if you are able to keep your knee completely straight when lifting your leg. Perform 2 sets of 10 repetitions.



Navigating Stairs

"Up with the good. Down with the bad."

1. Hold onto the railing during stair negotiation.
2. Step up with the "good leg" (non-surgical leg) first, then the surgical leg.
3. Step down with the "bad leg" (surgical leg) first, then the non-surgical leg.