

# Post-Operative Instructions ACL Reconstruction

## Prescription Medications

### **Aspirin: \*NECESSARY**

- This medication is given to help prevent blood clots after surgery. This may also cause stomach upset so try to take this with food as well.
- Please take 325mg daily.
- You will take this medication for a total of 30 days after surgery.

### **Oxycodone (Optional):**

- This medication is for pain.
- This medication is to be taken AS NEEDED.
- Plan to stay on a scheduled dose of 1-2 tablets every 4 hours for the first 2-4 days after surgery.
- After 2-4 days you should be able to space out or discontinue the medication.
- Do not drive, drink alcohol while taking this medication.

### **Colace (Optional):**

- Take 1-2 pills throughout the day to prevent constipation, which is common after surgery and while you are taking narcotics for pain control.
- It is normal to take several days to have a bowel movement after surgery.
- Drink plenty of clear liquids as the anesthesia can cause dehydration and constipation

### **Zofran (Ondanestron) (Optional):**

- This is an anti-nausea medication. Take this AS NEEDED

## General Postoperative Instructions

### Wound Care and Showering

- Leave the surgical bandage on and do not shower for 48 HOURS.
- After 48 hours, remove bandages and gauze, but LEAVE STERI STRIPS (white tape, similar to white band-aids) in place during showers. It is normal to see bloody soaked fluid on the bandages.
- Apply waterproof band-aids to each incision prior to showering. If the wounds get wet while showering, this is OK; however, we prefer to keep the wounds dry during the first 5 days after surgery.
- In between showers, leave open to air with steri strips in place.
- Do not apply lotions or ointments to the incisions.
- Your stitches are absorbable under the skin – you will not need stitches removed after surgery.
- Do not soak incisions in any pool/bath water until 3 weeks postoperatively or until your incisions are completely closed.
- Do not allow pets to sit on your lap or sleep in your bed for at least 4 weeks following surgery. Pets may harbor fleas, mites or other organisms that may cause an infection.

### Physical Therapy

- Physical therapy should start ideally within the first couple days after surgery.
- If your surgery is on Friday, it is okay to wait until early the following week.
- Choose a PT clinic close to your home so that you are compliant with your program, and schedule your first appointment for the first couple days following surgery (be sure to call and schedule physical therapy PRIOR to your surgery).
- For your first visit, please bring your prescription for physical therapy, provided at your preoperative clinic visit. You and your therapist can access the physical therapy protocol on our website at [www.AngelinaVeraMD.com](http://www.AngelinaVeraMD.com) → Patient Info → Physical Therapy Protocols → ACL reconstruction
- At your first physical therapy visit, your therapist should instruct you on proper weight bearing and teach you how to perform a home exercise program

### Weight Bearing

- **You will be WBAT (weight bearing as tolerated). Use crutches as needed after surgery to maintain a normal gait. Let pain be your guide.**
- Please walk with your foot flat and mimic normal gait.
- You may begin to progress your weight bearing slowly as directed by your therapist, unless you undergo a microfracture, cartilage procedure or meniscus repair procedure (this will delay the time until you may begin full weight bearing, typically maintaining PWB for a total of 6 weeks following surgery).
- Getting off the crutches takes each patient a different amount of time.
- Don't try to rush yourself to get off the crutches.

## Ice

- If using the ice machine, the machine will automatically stay on to provide continuous low temperatures and limit inflammation postoperatively
  - Use it as much as you like or can tolerate for the first 72 hours.
  - After the first 72 hours, try to use it 4-5 times per day for the first two weeks after surgery.
  - You do not need it after 2 weeks.
- If using simple ice packs, ice the knee as much as you can for the first 72 hours – 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off.
  - Ice your knee 4-5 times per day after the first 72 hours.
  - Place the ice onto the knee over a thin layer of clothing or material, but never directly onto the skin.
  - Use as needed for the first 2 weeks.
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## Ted Hose

- You will be given a pair of ted hose (stockings) to wear after surgery. These help in the prevention of blood clots postoperatively.
- Please wear these at all times for the first 2 weeks following your surgery.

## General Activity Levels

- It is beneficial to change positions often after knee arthroscopy. Alternate sitting, reclining, and lying down approximately every 30 minutes. Feel free to move around at home as much as you can tolerate, as we do not want the knee to get stiff.
- You will be permitted to drive (automatic transmission) **4 days** after surgery as long as you can fully weight bear, are not taking any narcotics and you feel comfortable doing so.

## Follow-Up

- A follow up visit will be scheduled with Dr. Vera 10-14 days following your surgery.
- Please call the office at 702-990-2290 if you don't have an appointment.
- Routine post-operative follow up appointments will be made 2 weeks, 6 weeks, and 3 months following surgery.

## When should you Contact the Office

- You have a fever > 101.4 (a low grade temp is expected after surgery, but let us know if it gets this high!)
- You develop chills or sweats
- You have pus or increasing redness and warmth surrounding the incision sites
- You develop calf swelling or calf pain after surgery
- You experience any chest pain or difficulty of breathing

## Possible Postoperative Complications and Risks

- **Infection:** The risk of infection is decreased with a sterile operating environment and antibiotics. Starting three days before your surgery, be sure to keep the skin of your knee as clean as possible using soap and water. Following surgery, careful handling of the incision sites reduces the risk of infection.
- **DVT:** Developing a DVT (deep vein thrombosis, aka blood clot) is decreased through instituting early motion, mechanical means (TED hose) and medications (Aspirin). Following the pre-operative and post-operative instructions will reduce the risk of blood clot formation.
- **Pain:** With any surgical procedure, there is a potential complication of pain. Medication, ice, rest, compression, elevation and therapy reduce post-operative pain.