



WOODS MILL ORTHOPEDICS

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314-576-7013

ACL Reconstruction

Post-Operative Instructions

Follow Up Appointment: _____

(If you need to adjust appointment time or date, please call 314-576-7013)

General Instructions:

- Do not drive until after your follow up appointment or if you are taking pain meds.
- **AVOID SMOKING !** It prolongs healing time.
- Resume regular diet slowly. Start with soft foods and progress to normal diet.
- Low-grade temperatures below 101.5 are common after surgery and should resolve after a few days once you start to move around more.
- **Notify Dr. Spitzfaden at 314-576-7013 if any of the following occur:**
 - Pain not relieved by prescribed dose of pain medication
 - Fever >101.5 or chills
 - White or yellow pus drainage from incisions.
 - Foul odor from dressing.
 - Continuous bleeding from incisions (small amount is acceptable).
 - Call 911 if have shortness of breath/chest pain/changes in vision or speech.

* **Brace:** You will have a hinged knee brace in place. It must be securely fastened when walking. You are allowed FULL WEIGHT BEARING with the brace on.

Wound Care:

- You will have several small incisions from your arthroscopic reconstruction
- All have been stitched closed with suture that will require removal in 10-14 days.
- A small amount of clear drainage or bleeding is normal.
- You may loosen bandage if it seems too tight.
- Keep dressing clean and dry. **DO NOT REMOVE UNTIL 3rd DAY AFTER SURGERY.**
- On Day 3, remove dressing and apply band aids and ace wrap to cover incisions. Do not apply any ointments to incisions. May leave open to air (without bandages) for short periods during day while home. Bandages should be worn when out of house until return to the office.
- Change dressing daily.
- **SHOWER :** OK to shower on Day 3 after dressing removed. **DO NOT SOAK** incisions. **DO NOT SCRUB** incisions. Be sure to pat incisions dry afterwards, then reapply dry dressings.
- Do not bathe or swim until sutures removed and incisions healed.

Ice & Elevation:

- Keep affected knee elevated with your foot on 1-2 pillows as much as possible during first week. **DO NOT PLACE PILLOW BEHIND KNEE** for elevation -- this will make it difficult for you to ultimately straighten your knee.
- **ICE** the knee as much as possible for first several days. Apply ice for 20 minutes every 2-3 hours. If an ice machine was provided, use as much as possible for first couple days, then as needed for pain relief and swelling.
- Make certain to apply a cloth layer between your skin and cooling pad / ice pack to avoid thermal injury to your skin.

Medications:

- Do not wait until pain block wears off to begin taking prescribed pain medication.
- Take medicine as needed. Medicine may take 30-45 minutes to take effect.
- Take medicine with food to help prevent upset stomach.
- Do not use tylenol or acetaminophen in combination with narcotic pain medicine (pain medicine may include these substances)
- Narcotic meds may cause constipation. Over the counter stool softeners may be used to help prevent this side effect.
- You may supplement your pain med with ibuprofen or Aleve for any breakthrough pain.

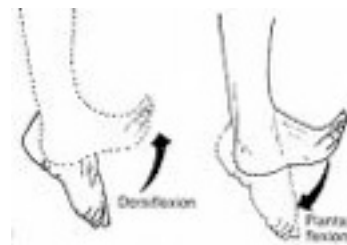
Activities & Exercises:

- After surgery you will have a hinged knee brace in place. It should be set to allow for full motion.
- You are allowed **FULL WEIGHT BEARING WITH BRACE** after surgery. Crutches may be needed to assist with walking and may also be used until your pain subsides.
- It's OK to undo the brace to let your knee "breathe" while you are lying in bed or on the couch. While walking, your brace must be securely fastened.
- It's OK to remove the brace to work on gentle exercises below.

*** The following exercises should begin on 1st day after surgery and are designed to provide range of motion and strength to the knee.**

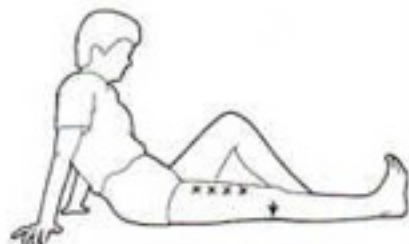
ANKLE PUMPS

- Pump ankles up and down.
- Do 10-20 pumps per hour while awake.



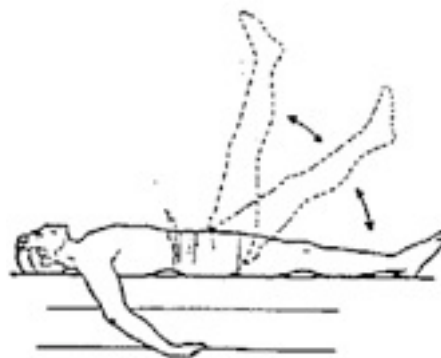
QUAD SETS

- Sit on firm, flat surface.
- Straighten your involved leg towards floor as much as you can. (ie. push back of knee to floor)
- Tighten quad muscles .
- Hold for 5-10 seconds.
- Repeat 4x per day for first 3-4 weeks after surgery.



STRAIGHT LEG RAISES (do with brace initially)

- While maintaining the tightened quad position, slowly raise the straightened (surgical) leg off the floor.
- Hold for 5-10 seconds and lower slowly
- Repeat 4x per day for first 3-4 weeks after surgery.



RANGE OF MOTION

- Goal is 90 degrees of flexion (knee bending) by first follow-up appointment.

Short Arc Exercises (remove brace)

- Roll up several towels into a roll 6-8 inches thick. Lie in bed.
- Put the rolled up towels under surgical knee.
- Keeping knee on roll of towels, lift foot to straighten the knee.
- Hold for 5-10 seconds. Then lower foot.
- Repeat 4x per day.



Heel Slides (remove brace)

- Lie down or sit with leg stretched out in front of you. Put a plastic bag or cookie sheet under one foot to help it slide.
- Slide heel toward buttock while keeping it on the bed. Move as far as you comfortably can.
- Hold for 5-10 seconds, then slide heel back slowly.



Additional Knee Flexion Exercise (remove brace)

- Sit on floor with legs out and feet flexed forward. Place a towel around heel of your injured leg.
- Pull the towel toward you, sliding your heel toward buttocks. Keep heel in contact with floor.
- When you feel a stretch (tightness) in the knee, hold the position for 10 seconds. Slide your foot back out.
- Repeat 4 times.



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