

PATIENT POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

ACL RECONSTRUCTION

1. DRESSINGS AND STERI-STRIPS

- In general, you can begin showering 2-3 days after surgery, as long as the dressings have been removed/changed.
 - Normally the medical assistant will change your dressings at the first visit post surgery.
 - Leave the steri-strips on your incisions until they fall off on their own.
- Do your best to keep the surgical site dry.
 - Make sure to towel dry/dab the surgical site, however DO NOT rub the area.
- Do NOT submerge the leg (ie. hot tub / bath, swimming, etc) until at least 2 weeks after surgery.

2. ACTIVITY

- You can begin weight bearing as tolerated (WBAT) on the operative leg immediately after surgery, unless otherwise specified by Dr. Berry.
- Crutches have been provided to assist you with this while your pain decreases. You can discontinue use of the crutches as tolerated, but begin to wean off the crutches as soon as you can.
- When using the crutches, attempt to walk in a normal gait pattern (heel-to-toe).
- You will be placed in a long-legged post-op brace that must be worn AT ALL times until told otherwise by Dr. Berry or his assistant
- You are allowed to drive when you can walk normally without crutches and not under the influence of pain medications.

3. PHYSICAL THERAPY

- Your first physical therapy session should occur approximately 2 weeks after your surgery.
 - A physical therapy prescription will be provided to you at that time with Dr. Berry's protocol by the medical assistant.
 - Please follow the instructions that the medical assistant has given you.
- It is recommended that you attend physical therapy 2-3 times per week after surgery, with exercises performed daily at home.
 - People often ask if they can do this on their own, or do it with a trainer at the gym, our answer is NO!

4. CPM Machine

- Use the CPM machine for a minimum of 6-8 hours a day to prevent scar tissue and improve range of motion.
 - You will be contacted either before surgery or within 2 days after surgery to

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schedule a delivery time for the machine

- You will use the CPM machine for 21 days after surgery.
 - You may use your cold therapy device in conjunction with the use of the CPM machine.
- Start the CPM at -5 degrees or as tolerated, and increase at a minimum of 10 degrees daily up to 90-110 degrees.

5. PAIN

- Your anesthesiologist will discuss with you in regards to a block which is an injection that will help with pain control and can last up to 36 hours.
 - We highly recommend getting the block to facilitate pain control and initiation of recovery.
- You have been provided with a prescription for several different medications that when used together will provide the most effective relief after your surgery.
 - Read each bottle carefully and follow instructions
- Once you no longer require narcotics for pain control, switch to Extra-Strength Tylenol as required, but do not take Tylenol with the narcotic.
- Use an ice pack or cold therapy delivery system for 20 mins every hour while awake to help with pain and swelling.

6. BLEEDING AND SWELLING

- It is common to have some spotting through the dressings following surgery. Place an additional dressing over the area if this occurs.
- The incisions may continue to “leak” fluid after removal of the initial dressing – this is common and should not raise concern. Place an additional bandage or Band-Aids over the incisions to help them heal. Keep the incisions clean and dry.
- When sitting or lying, keep your leg elevated with several pillows placed under the ankle (not the knee) to help decrease swelling and relieve pain.

7. DIET

- Resume your regular diet following surgery – drink plenty of fluids!
- Add additional fiber to your diet to help relieve the constipation associated with the pain medication.

8. RED FLAGS

- If you develop any of the following symptoms contact the office or go to your nearest emergency department for assessment:
 - Increasing calf pain / swelling that does not improve with elevation and ice

Robert E. Berry | DO

ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY & SPORTS MEDICINE

S.P.O.R.T | SPORTS PHYSICIANS, ORTHOPEDICS, AND REHABILITATION OF TEXAS



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- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Redness and purulent drainage from the incision

9. POST-OPERATIVE VISIT

- Your first post-operative visit is scheduled for: _____

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