

## PATIENT POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

### Total Knee Arthroplasty (TKA)

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#### 1. DRESSINGS AND STAPLES

- The staples closing your incision will be left in place for approximately 10-14 days following surgery.
- The dressing covering your incision will be changed by the nurse or Physician Assistant (PA) at the first postoperative visit in clinic unless Home Health is provided.
- Showering: You may **NOT** get the incision wet until your staples have been removed.
- Keep the incision clean and dry. Feel free to re-apply a sterile dressing over the incision once the initial dressing has been removed. It is advised to change the dressing every 2-3 days.
- Do NOT submerge the leg (ie. hot tub / bath, etc) until 2-3 days after your staples are removed and the incision is well healed.
- No ointments, creams, or lotions on the incision until your staples are removed. Once removed, you can use Aquaphor twice a day.

#### 2. ACTIVITY

- You can begin weight bearing as tolerated (WBAT) on the operative leg immediately after surgery, unless otherwise specified by Dr. Berry.
- Attempt to walk in a normal gait pattern (heel-to-toe) while using an assistive device (walker or crutches)
- Ambulation will help relieve swelling (and pain) following surgery and also helps prevent blood clots, so we advise you to ambulate as much as tolerated!

#### 3. PHYSICAL THERAPY

- Your first physical therapy session should occur approximately 2-3 days after surgery. It is recommended to schedule this appointment before your surgery occurs as many physical clinics have extended wait lists.
- You should begin the post-operative exercises in this package on the first day after your surgery and continue them until your first physical therapy visit.
- For the first 6-8 weeks, you should attend physical therapy 2-3 times per week with exercises performed daily at home.

#### 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 schedule a delivery time for the machine

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### Total Knee Arthroplasty (TKA)

---

- 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 -5-60 degrees or as tolerated, and increase at a minimum of 10 degrees daily up to 120 degrees.

#### 5. BLEEDING AND SWELLING

- The incision may continue to “leak” some fluid or a small amount of blood after removing the initial dressing – this is common and should not raise concern. Place an additional bandage over the incision to help it heal. But, keep the incision clean and dry (No ointments or creams!).
- 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.
- After your surgery we will want you to take 325mg of Aspirin twice a day in order to help reduce the risk of blood clots for the first 4 weeks after surgery unless told otherwise by Dr. Berry or your PCP.

#### 6. 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.

#### 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 medications.
- If you have diabetes, it is very important to maintain normal glucose levels after your surgery.



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

#### 9. POST-OPERATIVE VISIT

- Your first postoperative visit is scheduled for: \_\_\_\_\_.

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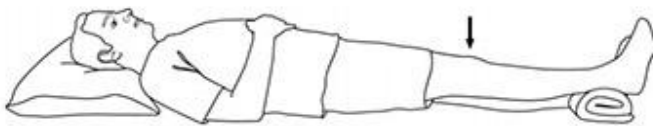
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#### INITIAL POST-OPERATIVE EXERCISES:

- Begin the following exercises, as tolerated, on postoperative day 1 after your surgery.
- Exercises should be carried out in a slow, controlled manner. Slight discomfort is normal during these exercises, however, if you experience significant pain STOP the exercises.

**Passive Knee Extension** – Place a rolled-up towel or cushion under the ankle of your surgical leg. Do not place anything under your knee. Allow your muscles to relax and let gravity bring your leg into full extension (ie. fully straight). Hold this position for 10-15 minutes. Repeat 3 times per day.



**Heel Slides** – Lie on your back. Bend your surgical leg by sliding your heel toward your bottom to a position that you can tolerate. Hold for 5 seconds then slowly return your leg to a straight position. Do not bend past 90 degrees for first 2 weeks. Perform 2-3 sets of 10-15 reps, 3 times per day.

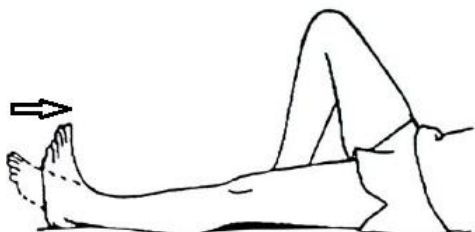


**Ankle pumps** – With surgical leg straightened, gently flex your foot and point your toes (bend and straighten the ankle). Perform 2-3 sets of 10-15 reps, 3 times per day.

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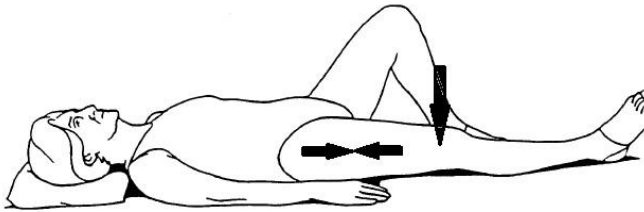


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**Quad Sets** – Lie on your back with your surgical leg straight. Push the back of your knee into the bed while tightening the quadriceps muscle (front of the thigh). Hold for 5 seconds, then release. Perform 2-3 sets of 10-15 reps, 3 times per daily.



**Straight Leg Raise** – Only perform this exercise if you are able to without any significant pain. Lie on your back with your arms at your sides. Bend your non-surgical leg to 90 degrees. Your surgical leg should be straight. Tighten your quadriceps and lift your leg 8-12 inches off the floor. Hold for 3-5 seconds then lower slowly. Perform 2-3 sets of 8-10 reps, 3 times per day.

