



General Discharge Instructions Following Knee Arthroscopy:

Pain Management

- You may have received an anesthetic knee joint injection which will provide pain relief for a few hours.
- You will have pain after the anesthetic knee joint injection wears off. Anticipate this and start your pain medication prior to the medication wearing off.
- It is important to control your pain after surgery. Take your first dose of the prescribed pain medication as soon as you get home, even if you have no pain.
- Continue to take your pain medication as prescribed for 48 hours after surgery. Make sure that you are alert and are not having any difficulty breathing before taking the medication.
- You can expect the first night will be the most painful and uncomfortable. You have been given narcotic pain medication to take home and make you as comfortable as possible, but you may still have some break through pain.
- After the first 48 hours, you may take the pain medication as needed for pain.

Antibiotics

- IV antibiotics are given at the time of surgery and are chosen based upon any allergies you may have. Normally, you will not be sent home with any antibiotics.

Activity

- You may weight bearing as tolerated after surgery, unless you have been instructed otherwise by your physician or the clinical assistant when your surgery was scheduled. It may be helpful to use crutches or a walker for ambulatory assistance for the first several days and then as you feel comfortable they can be discontinued.
- Elevate your leg to keep it above the level of your heart as much as possible during the first 48-72 hours following surgery to help decrease the swelling and pain.
- Ice can be very helpful in decreasing the pain and swelling of the knee. Start by icing the knee for 20 minutes and then remove the ice for 20 minutes. Repeat this sequence. DO NOT place ice directly on the skin.
- Perform gentle range of motion of the operative knee 2-3 times daily for 10 minutes beginning the day after surgery.

Wound Care

- You will probably wake up from surgery with an ace bandage from the foot to the thigh. This needs to stay in place and be kept clean and dry for the first 3 days after surgery. The dressing can then be removed. Place band aids over the sutures.
- You may shower after the dressing has been removed and there is no drainage from the wound. Cover band aids / sutures with plastic wrap during the shower to keep dry. If band aids become wet from shower remove the band aids and replace with dry band aids.
- Do not immerse or soak operative knee in water until follow-up examination.
- Bleeding through the dressing is quite common following surgery. This normally occurs for the first 1-2 hours after surgery. The actual bleeding has stopped by the time you see the drainage through the dressing.

Important Things to Watch for and do

- Severe swelling and/or pain in the leg or calf. This could indicate a blood clot in the leg.
- Profuse bleeding. If the bleeding continues to soak through your dressing and increases in size on your dressing.
- Fever > 101.5° F. Fevers less than this are very common the first few days after surgery and are unlikely to indicate infection.
- Severe pain. If your pain does not improve after pain medication, except for the first night after surgery.
- If you note any of the above problems or concerns, please contact our office at (239) 325-4090. If you need to call after hours, a message will be given to the on-call nurse to contact you regarding your problem or concern. **Please note the on-call nurse will not adjust or change your pain medications nor will they prescribe any new or different medications.** If you are not able to reach anyone or you feel you have a medical emergency, please go to the nearest emergency room or call 911.

Medications

- A narcotic pain medication prescription will be prescribed for you upon discharge from the hospital or surgery center. These medications are used to reduce your pain and must not be taken any more often than prescribed. Contact the office during normal business hours to have this medication adjusted or prior to running out. Pain medication will **NOT** be refilled after normal business hours. **No exceptions!**
- Pain medication should be taken with food as this will help to prevent any stomach upset.
- Do not drive while taking pain medications.
- Do not drink alcohol while taking pain medications.
- You may resume your routine medications unless otherwise instructed.
- Often pain mediation and inactivity cause constipation. Eat high fiber foods (fresh fruits, vegetables, bran) and increase your fluid intake. You may also contact your pharmacy or family physician to determine what over the counter medication you are able to take to help with your constipation.

Diet

- After having general anesthesia, gradually increase your diet as tolerated. Start with liquids, advance to soft foods and finally resume your regular diet. Avoid any spicy or greasy foods after surgery.

Follow-up

- You should be seen in the office for follow-up 10-14 days following surgery. This appointment will be with the clinical assistant. Contact the office today if you have not already made this appointment at (239) 325-4090.
- At your follow-up appointment, your sutures will be removed from your incision. This may be an uncomfortable experience. We would advise you to take your pain medication prior to your appointment.