

POST-OP ACL INSTRUCTIONS – Dr. Kephart

Name: _____

Elevation and Ice:

- Elevate your leg several times during the day and night for the first two weeks.
- Ice your knee at least 4–5 times per day for 20 minutes at a time.

Dressings:

- Change 4 x 4 gauze dressings every other day, or daily if they get wet or soiled.
- DO NOT touch, remove, change or clean steri-strip tapes over arthroscopic portals. DO NOT apply or use any ointments, betadine, peroxide, etc.

Sutures:

- At two (2) days from date of surgery, you may remove your dressings AND keep if possible) all steri-strip tapes from the incisions. (the steri-strip tapes help facilitate wound closure).
- Apply normal household band-aids to your incisions (just enough to cover the incision itself – alot of band-ads are NOT needed)
- There may be tag of suture at either end of the incision. This will be removed in clinic at one to two (1-2) weeks from date of surgery.
- You may submerge your knee in swimming pool for water workouts (if this is part of your prescribed rehab) seven (7) days after wounds are closed.

Bathing:

- You may take a shower but it is *very important* that you keep your wounds completely dry for the first 7 to 10 days after surgery. To avoid getting your knee wet, wear a waterproof bag (garbage bag) in the shower. The shower bag can be very slippery on the bottom, so be careful. Dr. Kephart prefers you to wear your brace in the shower, under a shower bag, if you can for the first 5 days after surgery. At one (1) week you may remove your brace to shower.
- Suggestion: Cut a hole in the bottom of the shower bag so that the foot rests on the shower floor. This will help prevent slippage.
- Avoid hot tubs or the ocean for four (4) weeks from the date of surgery.

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Crutches:

- Crutches should be used for the first 1-3 weeks. At that point you may wean yourself from them
- By 3-4 weeks, you should be prepared to discontinue your crutches altogether.
- Weight bearing is permitted as tolerated.

Range of Motion:

- Remove your brace 3-4 times per day to straighten and bend your knee.
- You need to get full extension and 120 degrees of flexion.
- Extension is the most important motion to work on in the first 2-3 weeks after surgery
- Towel roll exercises at the most important – these should be performed at least 3 times a day for the first week.
- *Complete knee extension or hyperextension by 2 weeks after your surgery is the #1 rehabilitation goal initially after the surgery.*

Braces:

- **Knee brace** – This is your post-operative knee brace to be worn for a period of four to six (4-6) weeks. You will wear it at all times except with physical therapy. You may wear this over clothes. Brace will be locked in full extension.
- At 6 weeks postop, you may be fitted for another brace if needed.

Rehabilitation:

- You will meet with the physical therapy team for exercise and sport cord instruction. *Please be sure to follow the recommended rehabilitation program.* Dr.Kephart will give you a post-Op ACL protocol to give your therapist.

Rest:

- Rest is a key element to recovery. Please take time to rest your knee. Don't overdo it! Elevate your knee as much as possible.

TED Hose:

- These are anti-embolism stockings (they will help to prevent a blood clot in your legs). Signs and symptoms of a blood clot include pain, redness, and swelling in the calf muscle and/or behind the knee.
- You must wear the stockings on both legs for two (2) weeks. Please remove them every day for one to two hours only so that you may wash them. Do not put the socks in the dryer.
- Be sure to have the socks pulled up all the way to your knee. DO NOT wear them halfway down your calf, as this will cause swelling.

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- Be sure to move/rotate both ankles frequently during the day. Pump them up and down! This will promote circulation and drainage of swelling.

Medications:

- Vicodin or Percocet – These are for pain and contain powerful narcotic pain medications with acetaminophen (Tylenol). Take only as needed. DO NOT drink alcohol or take any additional Tylenol. DO NOT drive while taking Vicodin or Percocet.
- Naprosyn (anti-inflammatory). Take one pill twice daily for ten (10) days.
- Ambien. A sleeping aid medication that might make you more comfortable initially after your surgery
- If you have trouble with your medications, please call the office.