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Knee Arthroscopy Post-Operative Instructions

Initial Instructions

- Ice and elevation along with pain medicine are your keys to initial pain management.
- After you arrive home, rest the remainder of the day. You may be tired or nauseated from the anesthesia and/or pain medication.
- You will be given crutches upon discharge. Continue to use until your first post-op visit.

Dressing Change

- Leave the dressing in place for 48 hours following surgery.
- After this, remove the dressing making sure to leave the steri-strip tape on the incisions in place.
 - The steri strips will stay in place for 1 ½ to 2 weeks before falling off on their own.
- You may now apply a new, clean, dry dressing at least once a day.
 - Place sterile gauze over the incisions and then wrap the knee with an ACE™ bandage.
- It is extremely important to keep the surgical site clean and dry at all times to help prevent infection.
- Signs of infection include redness, swelling, increased pain, warmth, fever (above 101.4 degrees F) and drainage from the wound. If you note any of these signs, please call the office immediately at 713-486-1820.

Bathing

- You may shower 48 hours after your surgery and get your incisions wet.
 - Let the water run down over the incisions but do not rub or scrub them.
- Do not soak or submerge the surgical site for at least 3 weeks following surgery.

Activity

- Rest and elevate your leg for the first 24 hours.
 - Use a pillow under your calf and ankle. Never place a pillow under your knee.
- Use your crutches while walking. You may progressively place weight on your leg as you feel comfortable unless instructed otherwise by your physician.
- It is very important to get your leg as straight as possible, as soon as possible.
- Begin range of motion exercises (ROM) on the first day post-op and advance during the first week.
 - Quadriceps Contractions: perform 5-10 every hour, push back of knee into bed and tighten thigh muscle.
 - Straight Leg Raises: perform 5 every hour, lift leg off bed to 45° angle.

- Work to obtain full extension by placing a rolled up towel under the heel and gently pushing the knee into the bed/flat surface.
- The clinical staff will arrange formal physical therapy as needed.

Cryotherapy

- Icing is very important to decrease swelling and pain, and improve mobility.
- Ice for 20 minutes each hour over surgical site.
 - Be sure to keep clothing or a towel between ice and skin, as placing the ice directly on skin may cause frostbite. **DO NOT PLACE ICE OR CRYOTHERAPY DIRECTLY ON SKIN.**

Medications

- You will be given a narcotic pain medication. This should be taken as needed every 4-6 hours for pain. Take with a little food.
- If given a prescription for an anti-inflammatory, such as Naproxen or Motrin - take as directed. Take with food.
- We recommend purchasing an over-the-counter stool softener (such as colace) to take as directed while taking narcotics to prevent constipation.

Post-Op Office Appointment

- If the appointment was not arranged prior to surgery, please contact the office at 713-486-1820.

Emergencies or Concerns

- Contact us at 713-486-1820 or go to the nearest emergency room.
 - Pain worsens or does not go away after pain medication is taken.
 - Redness or swelling in your thigh or calf that will not decrease.
 - Difficulties moving your toes.
 - Develop a fever greater than 101.4 degrees.
- Please note that refills on pain medication will not be approved during evenings or on weekends.