

Post-operative Instructions for ACL Reconstruction

Dr. Daniel Osuch

General Goals

- Full extension by 2 weeks
- Flexion 0-90 degrees by 3 weeks
- Flexion 0-120 degrees by 3 months
- Brace is locked in full extension for ambulation for the first 2 weeks post-op, then open (0-90) for weeks 3-6
- No Active Quadriceps from 0-30 degrees until 6 weeks
- If a meniscal repair was performed, no flexion past 90 degrees until 6 weeks post-op*
- Driving (when off pain medication): Left leg @ 2 weeks, Right leg @ 4-6 weeks

Day 1

- Full weight bearing as tolerated with crutches and the brace locked out straight
- Keep leg elevated as much as possible (toes above your nose)
- Use ice pack or cryotherapy system
- Start quad sets: hold for 6 seconds, 30 repetitions, 4 times daily
- See exercise sheet for further instructions

Week 1

- Start passive range of motion (PROM) and gentle range of motion with CPM machine:
 - start at -5 to 30 degrees and advance 10 degrees per day for a goal of 0-90 degrees by 7-10 days
- Unlock brace to work on extension: Place heel on a pillow and allow the knee to hang free. Try to get the knee all the way out straight
- Continue quad sets
- Begin Straight Leg Raises (SLRs) with the brace locked out straight, 20 repetitions, 3 times daily

Post-operative Instructions for ACL Reconstruction (continued)

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Dressing/Wound Care

- Do NOT get the bandage wet.
- After 2 days you may remove the bandages and dressings (**not the white steri-strips**)
- Leave the white steri-strips on the skin until they fall off on their own.
 - You may place band-aids over the small wounds.
- You may notice some drainage from the wound, this is normal. If this persists more than five days please call the office as a precaution (this can still be normal).
- On the 3rd day you may shower and let the water run over the wound. You do not have to cover the wounds. Do not scrub the wound, just blot it dry.
 - No baths, pools, or hot tubs until told.
- Some swelling or bruising around the knee or leg is expected and can last up to several weeks.
- Low-grade temperatures up to 101 are common after surgery, please call if temperature rises above 101.4.

Medications **Take as prescribed**

- Avoid taking any anti-inflammatories including Ibuprofen (Motrin and Advil) or Aleve (Naproxen) until cleared by your surgeon.
- You may take Tylenol as needed for pain- use as directed, do not take greater than 4 grams of Tylenol per day.
- You will have received a prescription for pain medication. Do not operate machinery or drive while taking this medication. May cause nausea or vomiting.
- You may have been given a prescription for an anti-nausea medication. Take as directed for any nausea associated with the pain medication.
- Any severe itching, hives or difficulty breathing, please call immediately.
- Please **begin taking Enteric Coated Aspirin 325mg daily** for the first 14 days after surgery.

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Exercise

- Perform straight leg raise exercises 20 times three times a day.
- Make sure you have minimal pain when doing exercises. If pain is severe, then perform less exercise or stop completely until pain decreases.
- Again, you may put as much weight as tolerated on your knee.

Physical Therapy

- On your first visit after surgery you will be given a prescription for physical therapy.

Return Visit

- If you do not already have a scheduled post-operative visit, please call for an appointment on the next business day.
- The first post-operative visit is usually 7-10 days after day of surgery unless instructed otherwise.
- If you have any problems, do not wait for an appointment, please call the office.