

ACL Surgery

After your surgery: An appointment will be made for you prior to you leaving the hospital or you will be given instructions on how and when to schedule your follow-up appointment. This is usually in 10 to 14 days.

Medications:

- A prescription for pain medication will be given to you upon dismissal. Please use the medications for pain as needed, and as prescribed.
- You may also take over-the-counter ibuprofen as directed for pain in addition to your prescription. Do not take ibuprofen if you are allergic to it, have stomach ulcers, or kidney problems.
- You will need to take Aspirin (325mg) by mouth twice daily with meals for two weeks after surgery to prevent blood clots. Do not take Aspirin if you are allergic to it, have stomach ulcers, or kidney problems.

Activities:

- Wear the hinged knee brace locked in full extension at all times. It helps to provide support to a knee with weak quadriceps thigh muscles.
- It is important that you sleep in this brace at night for the first 2 weeks after surgery to prevent a knee flexion contracture.
- However, excessive use of a brace can inhibit muscle recovery and impair circulation. Therefore, the brace should also be removed every 2 – 3 hours for 20 – 30 minutes while awake, and if in a safe protected environment and not walking. This is also a good time to apply the cold packs to your knee.
- Use crutches partial weight bearing as tolerated on your operative leg for the first 2 weeks after surgery.

Swelling:

- Keep your leg elevated as much as possible for the first few days after surgery.
- Apply your reusable cold packs (that have been provided to you) to your knee 4 – 6 times per day for 20 – 30 minutes.

Incision Care:

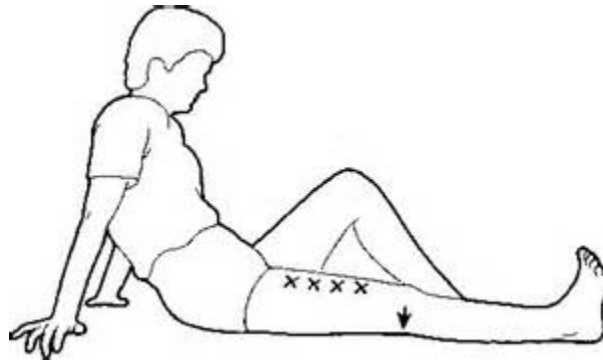
- You may remove your dressing 48 hours after your surgery.
- Once you remove your dressing you may rinse off your incision in the shower with clean soap and water.
- Clean incisions daily with rubbing alcohol. Cover your incisions with clean gauze dressings. Change the gauze dressings daily. Do not use any creams or ointments on your incisions.
- Do not soak your knee in a bathtub or whirlpool.
- Do not remove the steri-strips or sutures. Your doctor may remove these at your follow-up visit.
- Despite the greatest care, any wound can become infected. Contact your physician immediately if you run a fever, if your wound becomes more painful rather than less painful as days go by, becomes swollen, reddened or shows pus or red streaks.

Physical Therapy:

- Outpatient physical therapy will begin on a regular basis within a few days of your surgery. Your doctor will give you a prescription for physical therapy after surgery. You will be responsible for making your own appointment.

Home exercises:

1. Isometrics: Do this strengthening exercise by straightening your knee as straight as possible and clench the thigh muscle tightly. Hold the muscle clenched tight for five seconds, and relax. Repeat this exercise frequently during the day and try to do at least 100 tightening's per day to keep the tone and strength in the muscle.



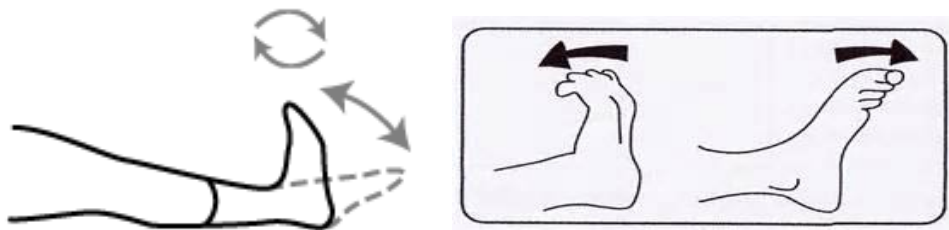
2. Knee Extension: Do knee extension stretching exercises 4 – 6 times per day for 20 – 30 minutes. Prop the foot up on one or two pillows, high enough to allow your knee to fully extend. This is also a good time to apply cold packs to your knee.



3. Knee Flexion: Work on flexing your knee as tolerated 4 – 6 times per day. Let your leg hang over the side of a bed and swing leg. Sit in a chair and plant foot on floor, then slowly scoot forward in chair.



4. Circulation: Do circulation exercises to help prevent blood clots in your legs by moving your ankle up and down wiggling your toes frequently throughout the day for the first two weeks after your surgery.



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