



# ANTERIOR CRUCIATE LIGAMENT (ACL)

*...after the procedure*



A Guide to Your **Discharge** and  
**Recovery** Process

### Medications

- ◆ A prescription for pain medications will be given to you upon dismissal. Please use the medications for pain as needed, and as prescribed.
- ◆ You will need to take one Aspirin (325mg) twice a day with meals for two weeks after surgery to prevent blood clots **UNLESS** you are allergic, have stomach ulcers or kidney failure.
- ◆ You may also take over-the-counter Ibuprofen (as directed) for pain in addition to your prescription **UNLESS** you are allergic, have stomach ulcers or kidney failure.

### Activities

- ◆ Wear the hinged knee brace locked in a full extension at all times.
- ◆ It is important that you sleep in this brace at night for the first 2 weeks after surgery to prevent a knee flexion contracture.
- ◆ 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 the knee at **least 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 using clean soap and water.
- ◆ Clean incisions daily with rubbing alcohol. Cover your incision with small clean gauze dressing. Change the gauze dressing daily. Do not use any creams or ointments on your incision.
- ◆ Do not soak your knee in a bathtub or whirlpool.
- ◆ Do not remove the steri-strips or sutures. Your doctor may remove them 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 after surgery. You will be responsible for making your own appointment.

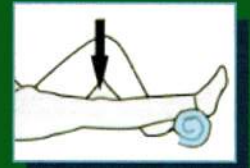
### Isometric

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



### 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 knees to fully extend.



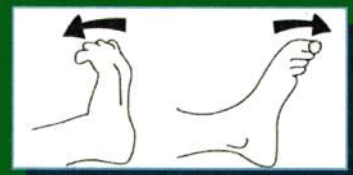
### Knee Bending

Work on knee bending as tolerated, at least 4-6 times per day. Let leg hang over side of bed and swing leg. Sit in a chair and plant foot on floor, then slowly scoot forward in chair.



### Circulation

Do circulation exercises to help prevent blood clots in your legs by moving your ankle up and down and wiggling your toes every few minutes while you are awake for the first one to two weeks.



An appointment will be made for you prior to you leaving the hospital or you will be given instructions on how/when to schedule your follow-up appointment.



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