

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS - CARTILAGE REPAIR / GRAFT

Post- op guide

- Toe Touch weight bearing x 6 weeks; full passive motion
- Start PT at 1 week for motion and quad sets
- Brace at all times until instructed otherwise

BRACE / MOVEMENT

For the initial 6 weeks following surgery you must limit the weight you put on the knee. Use crutches when ambulating with toe touch weight bearing only on the extremity. Wear the brace at all times. Getting your knee into full extension is very important. Perform knee **straightening exercises** 4 times per day for 20 min. by propping your heel onto rolled towel and allowing it to stretch. Limit standing and walking based on swelling and pain. Perform **straight-leg raise exercises** to help with quad strength (with assistance as needed).

ICE / Elevate

Use ice to help decrease swelling and pain after your surgery. May use at intervals of 20 minutes ON with at least 30 minutes OFF. Do not use ice while you are sleeping. If you received an ice machine, you can use 30 minutes at a time. You should use the ice machine for approximately two weeks.

In addition, elevate your leg, toes above your nose. This will help reduce swelling.

MEDICATIONS

If you were given a nerve block for anesthesia, it will wear off over 18-24 hours. During this time, you will have little to no feeling in the body part where you had surgery. If an injection of local anesthesia was injected into your wound, this will wear off in 5-6 hours. Therefore, begin taking the **pain medication** (e.g. Tramadol, Norco, Percocet) when you begin to have pain to prevent you from having severe pain. Take the pain medication as needed, every 4-6 hours. Take a **stool softener** until you are having normal bowel movements. If you are given a prescription for **Aspirin** to help thin your blood and prevent blood clots, take as directed.

The day after surgery you can take 600 mg of **Ibuprofen** (Advil/Motrin) every 6 hours to help with inflammation and pain. This will help cut down the use of narcotic-based pain medication.

DRESSING / BANDAGES

Keep your dressing clean and dry. You may remove the dressing 3 days after surgery and replace with waterproof band-aids. Your stitches will likely be dissolvable and under the skin; leave the steri-strips in place, they will fall off after about a week. It is okay to shower and let your incisions get wet 3 days after surgery. Until then, wrap with plastic to shower. No submerging in bathtub or hot tub for 2 weeks.

DRIVING

You may not drive with your operative leg until advised by physician.

APPOINTMENT

At your first post-operative within 1 week, you will be given a prescription for physical therapy.