



Anterior Cruciate Ligament Reconstruction (ACL) Discharge Instructions

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FIRST 24 HOURS:

- Have a responsible adult stay with you for the first 24 hours after surgery.
- Do not make any important decisions.
- Do not drink alcohol.
- Do not drive for 24 hours after surgery. After 24 hours do not drive until your surgeon tells you it is okay.

ACTIVITY:

- Weight bearing status as tolerated with immobilizer and crutches.
- Physical Therapy -as scheduled.
- You will find that you tire more easily during the first few days following your surgery. Be flexible, stop and rest when you are tired. Do not try to complete a large task all at one time. Ask your family or friends for assistance around the house.
- Perform ankle pump exercises 25 times per hour (flex your ankle and foot up and down) to prevent blood clots.
- Take frequent short walks and avoid sitting for long periods of time.
- Sleeping may be difficult for a while after having surgery. We recommend taking your pain medication about 1hour prior to going to bed to help you relax, control your pain, and facilitate sleep.

WOUND CARE:

- Wash your hands before and after changing your dressing.
- Return to Physical Therapy as scheduled for dressing change and drain removal Replace with gauze and continue daily dressing changes until there is no longer drainage from the incision. Leave steri- strips intact until they fall off by themselves. You may get your incision wet but do not soak incision until told by your surgeon.
- Ice and elevate for 24-72 hours to reduce swelling and to help control pain.

PAIN:

- Take your medicine exactly as it is prescribed.
- Make sure to take pain medication with food to decrease the chance of nausea.
- Do not drink alcohol while taking pain medication.
- You should not drive while taking narcotic pain medication as these medications can make you dizzy/drowsy.
- If you are having problems with pain control, contact your surgeon.
- It is OK to take over the counter non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications (ie. Aleve, ibuprofen, Advil) while you are taking narcotic pain medication).

DIET:

Today you should begin by drinking clear liquids (water, soda, tea, clear juices, Jell-O, popsicles and broth). If you do not feel nauseated, then you may try other foods that are bland (bananas, toast, noodles, crackers). Slowly resume your normal diet if you have success with liquids and bland foods. Stay away from foods that are greasy or spicy as they may make you feel sick. Your appetite may be decreased for up to a week after surgery. If you cannot eat 3 meals per day, snack often and make sure you increase your fluid intake.

CONSTIPATION:

Pain medication may contain narcotics, which can cause constipation. Eat a diet high in fiber (e.g. bran oatmeal cereal, prunes, fresh fruits, vegetables, and beans). Increase fluid intake. Consider the use of an over-the-counter stool softener. Ask your pharmacist for advice. These methods should help avoid problems with constipation.

NAUSEA & VOMITING:

After anesthesia and pain medication, it is not unusual to have a queasy stomach. It is more important to drink fluids to stay hydrated than it is to eat solid foods. If you have problems with vomiting, try to take small sips every 15 minutes. When you are able, begin to eat foods that are bland (bananas, toast, noodles, crackers). If you continue vomiting where you cannot tolerate anything to drink, notify your surgeon.

WHEN TO CALL YOUR SURGEON:

- Increased redness or swelling, increased drainage, or odor from the incision.

- A change in the color of the drainage from pinkish clear to bloody or yellow-white (pus-like in appearance).
- Increase in temperature over 101 degrees.
- Pain not relieved by pain medications.
- Prolonged nausea or vomiting.
- If you develop new calf pain, pain behind the knee, or shortness of breath this could be a sign of a blood clot. Call 911 or go to the ER immediately.
- If you had a nerve block and have numbness for more than 24 hours.

IF YOU DEVELOP ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS OR HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CALL YOUR SURGEON'S OFFICE AT (651) 439-8807. AFTER HOURS PLEASE CALL YOUR SURGEON'S OFFICE, AS HIGH POINTE SURGERY CENTER IS NOT OPEN 24 HOURS OR ON WEEKENDS.

Follow up with Twin Cities Orthopedics in 2 weeks. Please call to schedule your follow up appointment (651) 439-8807 .