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HOME REHABILITATION PROTOCOL AFTER KNEE ARTHROSCOPY

1. Proper Gait

When walking, try to avoid limping. Concentrate on contacting the ground with your heel, forcing your knee straight and rolling off the ball of your foot and toes.

2. Prone Hangs

This exercise helps to extend (straighten) your leg so that a full range of motion may be obtained. Lie face down on a firm table. Position yourself so that your knees are off the table (i.e. the table ends just above your knee). Allow gravity to extend your legs. You may do this exercise as often as you like for as long as you like as long as it does not cause significant pain. Some discomfort (a stretching sensation) in the back of the knee is normal.

3. Stationary Bicycling

Use of a stationary bicycle can help to regain range of motion and alleviate the sense of stiffness of your knee. If you have access to a stationary bicycle, you should use this one to two times a day for approximately 15-20 minutes. Initially the bicycle seat should be raised up high (so that your knee does not need to flex (bend) much) and you should set the bicycle for very little resistance. Lower the seat as your range of motion improves until your normal level is obtained. Do not use a road bicycle if a stationary bicycle is not available.

4. Quadriceps Squeezes (VMO Reeducation)

This exercise helps to strengthen one of the important thigh muscles (vastus medialis) that weaken after an injury or surgery. Lie on your back on a firm surface. Place a pillow under the ankle of the leg that was operated on. First, contract the thigh muscles of the leg that was not operated on. Hold for five seconds and then release. Then contract the thigh muscles of the leg that was operated on. While contracting these muscles, attempt to fully straighten your knee forcing it backwards toward the table. Alternate contractions between your non-operative and operative legs. You may do this exercise as often as you like. You should perform at least 25-50 contractions twice a day with your operative leg.

5. Quadriceps Strengthening (see separate sheet)

These four exercises are important to regaining your full function and strength after an injury or surgery. Follow the instructions on the following sheet. Attempt to perform these exercises once a day, four days a week.

6. Resumption of Activities

You may resume your activities at your own pace as your pain and swelling decrease, your range of knee motion improves, and your strength returns. Initially, as you increase your activities, you may find that there is some pain as well as the development of some swelling. This is normal. When this occurs, apply ice to your knee for 15-20 minutes at least twice a day and if you can safely use over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medications (ie. Motrin, Alleve, Advil, Aspirin, etc.), then you should use one for the next two to three days according to the instructions accompanying the medication.

7. Concerns

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to call me at either phone number listed at the top of these instructions.