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Post-Operative Instructions Following Knee Arthroscopy

1. WHEN DO I COME IN FOR MY FIRST FOLLOW-UP VISIT?

If an appointment has not already been scheduled, please call the office the day following surgery to schedule an appointment for approximately one week after your surgery.

2. WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT AFTER SURGERY?

After arthroscopy, it is normal to experience some discomfort. You should have received a prescription from the nursing staff at the hospital. Please fill the prescription and use the medication regularly as directed for the first twenty-four hours and then as needed after the first day. For minor discomfort, Tylenol may be used **instead** of the prescription medication. If you are able, you may also take NSAIDs (ie. Advil, Motrin, Aleve, Ibuprofen, etc.) **with** your prescribed medication.

A low-grade temperature (99-101 degrees F) is common. Please call the office if your temperature is consistently elevated over 101.5 degrees.

Try to keep the surgical leg elevated for the first two days. Your knee should be elevated above your heart. This can best be done by placing pillows under your calf.

3. HOW MANY DAYS SHOULD I USE MY CANE OR CRUTCHES?

Use your cane or crutches as needed. It is okay to put your full weight on your leg. As each day passes, you may find that the cane or crutches are not needed. Feel free to walk without them as tolerated.

4. HOW LONG SHOULD I KEEP MY KNEE DRY AND WEAR THE BANDAGE?

The bandage should be kept dry and in place for 48 hours. For the first 48 hours, it is best to take baths with your knee hanging out of the tub so that the dressing may remain dry.

Forty-eight hours after surgery, please remove and discard the bandages. There will be several stitches. At this point the stitches may get wet in the shower. Following your shower, pat the stitches dry and place Band-Aids over them. Do not immerse your knee in water (i.e. swimming, baths, or hot tubs) while the stitches are in place.

5. WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP REDUCE SWELLING AND DISCOMFORT?

Limiting your activities and resting with your knee elevated above your heart are the best methods of reducing swelling and discomfort and will speed up your recovery. Ice may also be used. This can be done by filling a plastic bag with ice cubes and placing it over your knee with a towel between the skin and the ice bag. Leave the ice in place for 15-30 minutes. This may be done every hour while awake.

Regarding your activity level, use common sense as your guide. Advance your daily activities as tolerated. Climbing and descending stairs, walking and sitting are all permitted as your comfort allows. Painful activities are to be avoided.

6. WHAT EFFECTS MIGHT I NOTICE FROM THE ANESTHESIA?

Some fatigue and lethargy may be noticeable for a day or two. Occasionally, nausea may occur. Eating light foods will help. Resume your regular diet as the nausea resolves.

7. WILL I HAVE AN EXERCISE PROGRAM TO FOLLOW?

You may have been scheduled for physical therapy in advance of your surgery. If you have not, please call our office so that we can assist in scheduling your therapy. In some cases, physical therapy is not necessary to achieve a full recovery, although it may hasten your progress. If therapy has not been suggested, you will be started on an exercise program to help rehabilitate your knee when you come to the office for your first post-operative visit. Depending on your status at your follow-up visit, formal physical therapy may be recommended.