

Dr. Harrell Post Knee Arthroscopy Instructions

You have just undergone an arthroscopic surgical procedure. The degree of swelling and discomfort you experience will vary depending upon what type of surgery was actually done inside of your knee. The following guidelines will help you during the post-operative period. If you have any questions, please call our office.

1. **ICE**

We suggest that you apply ice to the front portion of the knee (under the ace bandage), as much as possible during the first four days at her surgery (20-30 minutes every few hours). Make sure that you actually feel the cold. This will help limit swelling. The ice should be sealed in a plastic bag and the bag placed in a towel to avoid wetting the dressing.

2. **DRESSINGS**

Covering the wounds on your knee is a sterile dressing and an ace bandage on the top. The ace bandage is used to provide compression and minimize swelling. The dressings should be kept clean and dry. If you feel that the ace bandages are too tight and causing discomfort, you may re-wrap them in a looser fashion. If there is an ace bandage on your foot and ankle, it may be removed after two days. Knee bandages can be removed and dressing changed daily after 3 days with band aids. You may shower after the third day if there is no drainage on the bandage.

3. **ACTIVITY**

Although the incisions are small, your knee has undergone quite a bit of surgery. During the initial several days walking should be limited to that which is necessary and/or reasonably comfortable. Attempt to keep the leg elevated as much as possible, avoiding prolonged dependency. Increased pain and swelling indicates that you should reduce your activity level. Crutches or a cane should be used initially and discontinued only when walking without them is as painless and fluent as with them. It is ok to place weight on the operated extremity unless you were specifically given instructions to limit your weight bearing or remain non-weight bearing.

4. **EXERCISE**

Immediately after surgery you should begin range of motion exercises for your ankle ("ankle pumps"), flexing it up and down. This helps the venous circulation in your leg. These should be performed every hour while awake for the first few days. You should also start to tighten your quadriceps muscles (in your thigh) and do five slow "straight leg" lifts, holding the leg about one foot of the ground for 3-5 seconds. Do this three to four times a day. Begin trying to bend your knee, slide your heel up the bed toward your buttocks, or sit in a high chair and let your knee bend. Lastly, you should perform "extension sags" with a rolled towel under your heel and nothing under your knee, in order to get your knee straight. Four sets often second sags three to four times a day. These exercises should not produce extreme pain in your knee. If they do, DO NOT continue them! Your motion will

be limited somewhat by swelling but it is important to limit stiffness.

5. **MEDICATIONS**

You were given a prescription for a strong pain killer. Use as prescribed during the post-operative period. These can cause GI upset and/ or constipation. After several days, Tylenol, Aspirin or Advil should provide you with enough pain relief. We also recommend you take one aspirin a day, unless you are allergic to aspirin, or have a history of ulcer disease or gastroenteritis disease. This will help prevent blood clot formation in your leg.

6. **POTENTIAL PROBLEMS**

A range of surgical procedures done arthroscopically makes the recovery course and improvement times variable. You should not compare your course with that of other individuals. There are certain potential "deviations" from the routine course that you should be aware of.

A. **BLEEDING OR DRAINAGE**

Some bleeding and drainage is expected. If the ace bandage becomes stained, apply another one for compression. If this doesn't work or you think the drainage is excessive..... Call the office.

B. **FEVER**

If you have a temperature greater than 10 1 degrees on more than one reading 48 hours or more after surgery.....Call the office.

C. **SWELLING**

Swelling, numbness, coldness and tingling in the foot are usually an indication that the ace bandage is too tight. LOOSEN IT and elevate your leg. If this does not reduce the swelling.....Call the office.

D. **UNRELENTING PAIN**

If severe pain remains 48 hours after surgery.....Call the office.

If you have not yet made your follow up appointment, please call the office and do so.

If any problems arise please call the doctor at (318) 212-7841
The phone will be answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Medical Representations

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