

## ACL Reconstruction

### Incision Care:

- Remove ace bandages 3 days after surgery but keep steri-strips on the incisions. You may shower normally at this time and allow steri-strips to fall off on their own
  - It is not necessary to keep incisions covered unless irritated by the T scope brace
- No soaking of the incision until full healing, typically 6 weeks. This means no baths, jacuzzi, lakes, rivers, swimming pools, etc.

### T-Scope:

- You will be placed in a T scope brace after surgery which should be set at 0-30 degrees of flexion. The hinges should rest on each side of your knee. **If this is not the case, please call our office**
- On average, you will remain in this brace for 6 weeks, **only removing to shower**
- **You will be non-weightbearing for 2 weeks.**

### Ice/elevation: Swelling of the knee should be expected.

- Elevate the knee to heart-level with pillow under the calf or foot. Do not put anything underneath the knee.
- You may leave the ice on for 20 minutes at a time, each hour throughout the day.
- **If the calf becomes painful to touch or the lower leg becomes red, hot, and swollen, call our office immediately**

### Physical Therapy: This is the most important part of your recovery and requires daily exercises at home as well as with a physical therapist during the week.

- This should **begin 3-5 days after surgery**. Please have this scheduled prior to surgery to avoid any lapse in therapy.
- Most patients are in formal therapy for **3-6 months after surgery**. For the best results, we suggest continuing a home therapy program for up to 1 year.

### Miscellaneous:

- Driving
  - It is NOT recommended that you drive while taking narcotic pain medication.
  - If we have operated on your right knee, it will be about 6 weeks before you can drive.
  - If we have operated on your left knee, it will be about 2 weeks before you can drive.
- Returning to work or school:
  - Sedentary desk jobs or those who work from home may return 2-4 weeks after surgery. This will be evaluated at the first post-op visit.
  - Physically demanding jobs that require extended periods of walking or heavy lifting may expect to return full duty closer to 3 months. Return to light duty is an option if available.
  - Returning to school is possible as soon as pain is controlled and student is able to tolerate it.
- Return to sports:
  - This will be evaluated each visit and is dependent on physical therapy progression.
  - Jogging may begin at 4 months post op and typical full return is 6 months after surgery. This varies per patient and sport. Return to sports requires a custom knee brace.

### Red Flags:

These are reasons to contact the office immediately

- Fever of greater than 100.4 F, pus or continuous bleeding from the incision site
- Uncontrolled nausea or vomiting, lack of bowel movement 4 days after surgery



SPORTS MEDICINE • JOINT REPLACEMENT

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- Inability to move your leg more than 48 hours after surgery
- Unusual shortness of breath or chest pain