Arthroscopic Knee Surgery
Home Exercise Program

Right after Surgery

We want you to get back full range of motion after your knee surgery. It is safe for you to bend and straighten your knee. You may walk and bear weight on your operative knee. We want you to begin walking right away. **Begin the exercises in one to two days.** Do them daily. If an exercise is painful, stop doing it. Please keep in mind that these are guidelines. You may need to change what you do depending on your surgery, swelling, and level of pain.

**Crutches**

If you have crutches bring them the day of your surgery. If you do not have crutches they will be given to you in the hospital the day of your surgery. Your insurance will be billed for the crutches but you may need to pay a portion of the cost. You may bear weight on your knee after surgery. Slowly increase what you do, using pain and swelling in your knee as your guide. When walking with crutches, walk as you always do, heel first then roll over the ball of your foot. You may not need to use your crutches for more than 1-2 days. If you are having pain and swelling, use the crutches as long as you need them. Elevate the leg as much as you can during the first 48 hours after surgery. This will help to lessen the swelling. You should be able to walk without crutches sooner when the swelling is gone.

**Exercises**

**Ankle Pumps:** When lying or sitting, pump your ankle up, down, and around in circles several times per hour. This will help the return of blood in your leg. Do ankle pumps with both legs.

**Toe Raises:** Stand balanced on both feet. Gently rock up to your toes and back down to your heel. Do 3 sets of 20 toe raises throughout the day.

**Quad Sets:** Tighten the group of muscles on top of your thigh (quadriceps) and try to straighten (extend) your knee. You should be able to see and/or feel the muscle contract. Hold the quad for 5 seconds. Relax the muscle completely. Repeat. Try to do 100 quad sets each day in sets of 5-10.
**Straight Leg Raises:** Lie on your back, bend the good knee, and place that foot on the floor. Perform a quad set and lift your other leg up 1 to 1.5 feet off the ground. Hold for 3-5 seconds, and then slowly lower your leg. Relax. This exercise can be done 2-3 times a day. Each time try to do 3 sets of 20.

**3 to 4 Days after Surgery**

At this time you may feel stronger and ready to begin strengthening exercises. If you have access to an exercise bike, you may begin to ride with the bike set at a low resistance. Begin riding for about 5 minutes, then slowly increase your riding time over the next few days to about 20 minutes.

You may also begin

**Mini Squats:** Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. Slowly bend about 60° to 90° at the knees and then slowly stand back up. Keep weight balanced over both feet. You may need to use the back of a chair for balance. Repeat 10 times; do 3-4 times per day.

**Physical Therapy**

Dr. Anderson’ patients should make an appointment with Physical Therapy 3-5 days after surgery.

Dr. Baer and Dr. Dunn’s patients should make an appointment with Physical Therapy for 3-7 days after surgery. The order for this visit will be given to you at your post-op visit.

Dr. Scerpella’s patients should make an appointment with Physical Therapy 5–10 days after surgery. This appointment should be after your first post-operative clinic visit with Dr. Scerpella (although it can be scheduled in advance). The order for this visit will be given to you at your pre-op visit.

Dr. Graf’s patients may not have formal physical therapy. If he feels you need PT, he will talk to you about it at your post-op visit.

**When Should I Return to Work?**

Your time off from work will depend on what type of work you do. If you sit for most of your work day, you may be able to return to work within 2 days. If you perform heavy labor, you may be off from work up to 6 weeks. You should discuss this with your doctor.

**When Can I Drive?**

You may begin to drive when you feel that you can react quickly, and it is not painful to drive. **Do not drive while taking narcotic pain medicines.**
How Long Will My Recovery Take?

When you return to playing sports will be different for each person. This will depend on the amount of damage to your meniscus and the joint surface. We will explain this to you at your post-op visit. Most people do not return to high impact sports for about 4-6 weeks.

Follow-up visits to see Drs. Baer, Dunn and Graf should be made for 5-7 days after surgery.

Follow-up visits to Dr. Anderson should be made for 7 days after surgery.

Follow-up visits to see Dr. Scerpella should be made 7-10 days after surgery.

This appointment will be made at your work-up visit.