



George Ackerman, MD
ACL Reconstruction Post Operative Instructions

Pain Medication

- A pain medication prescription has been sent to your pharmacy and can be used if needed.
- Most patients find Tylenol (1000mg) and/or Advil (600mg) effective for pain control.

Ice

- You can ice the knee to reduce swelling and discomfort. Apply for 20 mins per hour as needed.
- If you are using a cryotherapy machine, you may use it as directed (machine has a timer).

Elevation

- When you are not walking, your leg should be straight with a pillow under your foot or ankle (not behind your knee). Try to elevate knee as much as possible to reduce swelling.

Dressing

- Keep the dressing dry and remove bandage 48 hours after surgery.
- Place band-aids over the incisions and re-wrap the ACE bandage to assist with swelling.

Showering

- You may shower 48 hours after surgery.
- Please use caution! Be careful not to slip and fall. The effects of anesthesia and/or medication may make you drowsy or light-headed.
- Do not soak in a bathtub, hot tub, or pool until the sutures are removed.
- Once you are done showering, pat the incisions dry and apply band-aids and the ACE wrap.

Crutches

- You may use crutches if needed for walking for the first 3-7 days following surgery.

Brace

- You should keep your brace on and locked in extension (straight) while walking and sleeping.
- The brace may be unlocked to allow for flexion (bending) when sitting.
- The brace may be removed for exercises and cold therapy.
- Brace hinges should be at the level of the kneecap. Velcro straps may need to be adjusted to maintain the proper position.

Continuous Passive Motion (CPM) Machine

- CPM machine should be used for at least 2-3 hours per day. Please start the day after surgery.
- Start from 0-30 degrees and advance flexion by at least 5 degrees per session.
- The goal to to achieve at least 90 degrees of flexion by the first post-op visit.
- Please contact the company (NuLife) for any machine-related questions.

Physical Therapy

- Please start PT within 1-3 days of surgery.
- Contact our office if you have not received a prescription or need assistance.

Follow-up Appointment

- Please follow up with Dr. Ackerman 1 week after surgery.
- Call the office to set up the appointment if you do not already have one scheduled.

Common Concerns

- Bruising and/or swelling of the knee, ankle, or foot are common after surgery. To relieve this discomfort, it is best use ice and elevation.
- Numbness around the incision site on the outside part of the knee is a result of a disruption of a superficial nerve during the operative procedure. Most of this will resolve over time but a small area the size of a quarter usually remains numb. This is unavoidable because of the proximity of the nerve to the incision.
- A sudden rush or feeling of fullness with pain when going from a sitting to a standing position in the knee is common after surgery.
- Right ACL Reconstruction patients should not drive for at least 2-3 weeks after surgery.

Please call if:

- If at any time, you have discomfort, swelling, or redness in the calf (behind the leg between the knee and the ankle)
- Any oozing or redness of the wound, fever (greater than 101.3° F), or chills
- Any difficulty breathing or heaviness in the chest

These are only general guidelines for what to expect after ACL Reconstruction Surgery. Please do not hesitate to call the office (516) 243-8506 or send Dr. Ackerman a message on the Patient Portal if you have any questions or concerns.