

**ACL RECONSTRUCTION POST-SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS – DR. Justin Schupbach**

**WOUND CARE**

1. Cryotherapy/ICEMAN (continuous icing machine) protocol: Use 10 to 14 hours per day until follow-up or use ice packs 20min per hour while awake. DO NOT put the ICEMAN pad directly against your skin (use a thin towel/clothing).
2. Remove tensor wrap & loose gauze in 3 days. Throw away loose gauze. If there are small white sticky bandages, leave them in place until they fall off. **Rewrap with tensor wrap.**
3. Keep incisions clean and dry until 72 hours after surgery, at which point you may shower unless your incisions are draining. No tub baths, swimming pools, hot tubs, etc. for a minimum of 3 weeks following surgery. DO NOT scrub or pick off the white sticky bandages or paper tapes (SteriStrips) underneath.

**ACTIVITY**

4. Start at 30% partial weight-bearing on the surgical leg and increase the amount of weight-bearing as tolerated while using crutches.
5. You do not require a brace.
6. No limit on your knee range of motion.
7. Avoid exercising or strenuous activities (other than those outlined in #9) until you are seen for your follow-up appointment.
8. Elevate the knee above the level of the heart to reduce swelling. To elevate properly, **DO NOT** place anything behind the knee but rather prop pillows under the lower leg and foot to keep the knee straight. Your knee maybe swollen for up to 4 weeks following surgery. Bruising around the knee and calf can be common.
9. Exercises: Perform all exercises 6 times a day (start today or tomorrow): quadriceps sets,

calf pumps, straight leg raises, heel slides (instructions below).

10. Schedule physical therapy to start 4-5 days following surgery: **ACL reconstruction protocol** - given to you in the clinic.

11. Driving: OK to drive automatic **ONLY if you had surgery on your left leg**. No driving of a manual/stick shift vehicle for 6-8 weeks. When going back to driving, be sure to test braking/acceleration maneuvers in an empty parking lot before entry into any traffic areas.

**ABSOLUTELY NO DRIVING WHILE TAKING NARCOTICS! (i.e., Tylenol #3/codeine, Norco, Vicodin, Percocet, oxycodone, etc.)!**

**DISCHARGE MEDICATIONS:**

1. Stool softeners such as Colace (Ducosate Sodium) or Senokot-S, 2 tablet: take once a day while taking narcotics. These medications do not require prescription.

2. **Aspirin/ASA 81 mg**, 1 tablet, take once a day for 14 days then stop (to prevent blood clots). Prescription not required. Please avoid taking other anti-inflammatory medications (ibuprofen, Motrin, Advil, Naproxen, Aleve etc.) while taking aspirin. You may ask at your first post-operative appointment if you can start these medications.

3. **Oxycodone 5mg**: ½ to 2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed based on your pain.

4. **Tylenol (acetaminophen) 325mg**: 2 tablets, 3 times per day (no prescription). Maximum 3000mg in 24hrs from all sources.

5. **Magnesium Oxide, 400mg**. Take ONCE per day, on any day that you take oxycodone.

5. Check your discharge package and prescriptions to see if any other medications were prescribed for you.

**DIET:** If no nausea, clear liquids should be taken initially. Then progress to solid foods when

clear liquids are tolerated. No alcoholic beverages for at least 48 hours or while taking pain medications. Drink plenty of fluids and eat high fibre foods to prevent constipation while taking prescription pain medications.

**EMERGENCY:** Call or return for any fevers (temperature greater than 101°F or sustained fevers greater than 100.5°F that haven't resolved within 3 to 4 days following surgery) or chills, increasing pain, swelling, redness, calf pain, drainage (especially if yellow, green, or foul smelling), excessive bleeding, chest pain, shortness of breath; After hours or in an emergency go to your local urgent care center, the ER or dial 911.

## **EXERCISES**

### **Quad sets**



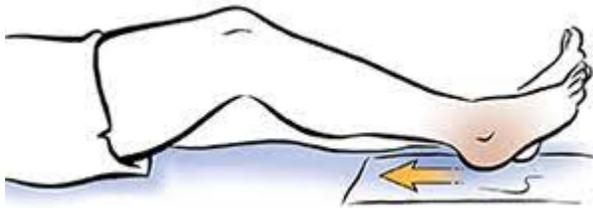
1. Sit with your leg straight and supported on the floor or a firm bed. Tighten the muscles on top of your thigh by pressing the back of your knee flat down to the floor.
2. Hold for 10 seconds, then rest for 10 seconds.
3. Do 5 sets of 10 repetitions several times a day.

### **Straight-leg raises**



1. Lie on your back with your good knee bent so that your foot rests flat on the floor. Your surgical leg should be straight.
2. Tighten the thigh muscles in the surgical leg by pressing the back of your knee flat down to the floor. Hold your knee straight.
3. Keeping the thigh muscles tight, lift your affected leg up so that your heel is about 12 inches off the floor. Hold for about 3 seconds, and then lower slowly.
4. You must be able to keep the knee straight as you lift. If it bends, continue to work on the Quad Sets (#1) until you can lift a STRAIGHT knee.
5. Do 3 sets of 25 reps

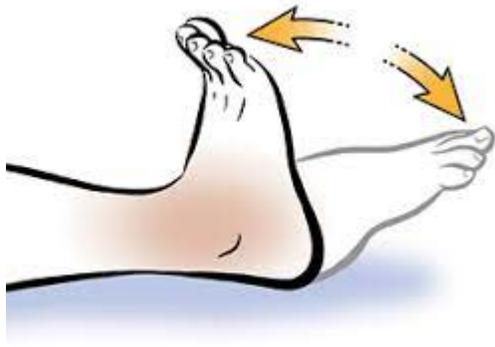
### Heel slides



1. Slide your heel back by bending your affected knee as far as you can. Towel may be used for assistance.
2. Hold for about 5 seconds, then rest for up to 10 seconds.
3. Tuck your non-surgical foot behind the surgical ankle and use your non-surgical leg to straighten the leg back out.

4. Do 2 sets of 25 reps

### **Ankle Pumps**



1. Sit or lay with your affected leg straight. You may also do this while your leg is elevated.
2. Keeping your affected leg straight, gently "pump" the ankle like pressing on a gas pedal.
3. Repeat 3 sets of 25 reps