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## POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

### PCL / MCL Reconstruction

#### Activity

- Try and rest the first few days following surgery. When sitting or lying down be sure to keep your leg elevated up above the level of your heart to help decrease swelling.
- **Ice** or the **cryo-cuff** can be used as much as possible for the first 3-4 weeks to help decrease swelling. If you are using the cryo-cuff make sure that you always protect the underlying skin with an ACE bandage or sleeve to prevent any superficial injury to the skin. Ice and the cryo-cuff should be used frequently for 20 minutes at a time.
- **Crutches** are recommended for the first 2-4 weeks (and occasionally longer) to help provide support and aid in ambulation.
- You will be \_\_\_\_\_ on your operative knee for the first \_\_\_\_\_ following surgery.
- You have been placed in a **knee immobilizer**. You will likely have to wear this for the first 6 weeks following surgery. The immobilizer needs to be locked (straight) in extension when standing or walking. The immobilizer also must be worn while sleeping at night. You may remove your brace 4-5 times a day while seated or lying down, and begin to bend and straighten your knee.
- A **continuous passive motion (CPM) machine** is utilized for the first couple of weeks following surgery to facilitate early motion. You can use the machine *with or without* your knee immobilizer. Be sure to unlock the knee immobilizer if you choose to use the machine with the brace. Your goal is to achieve full knee extension as well as flexion of \_\_\_\_\_ by 7-10 days following surgery.
- Driving is not recommended when taking narcotic pain medication.
- Return to (sedentary) work or school the 3-5 days after surgery if pain is tolerable. Return to heavy labor or excessive ambulatory activities will be determined by Dr. Montgomery.

#### Dressings

- Remove the outer dressing and gauze wrap 72 hours after surgery. Clean the surrounding skin with sterile water or rubbing alcohol and cover the sutures loosely with band-aids or a

clean dressing. Be sure not to vigorously rub over any of the incision sites as they are still healing.

- Small amounts of bloody drainage, numbness at incision site, knee swelling, and bruising are normal findings following surgery.
- Do not use bacitracin or any ointments under band-aids.
- If there are small white tape strips that have been placed across your incision, do not remove them.
- Keep your sutures / staples clean and dry until your first follow-up visit. If you wish to shower, plastic bags, saran wrap, and waterproof dressings can all be used to keep the area dry. **DO NOT SOAK** your knee in a bath tub.

#### Medication

- You have been prescribed the following **pain medications**:
  - Oxycodone – Please take 1 tabs every 4-6 hours as needed for pain.
  - Ultram – Please take 1 tab every 6 hours as needed for breakthrough pain.
- Excessive use of pain medication can lead to an increased incidence of side effects and long term dependency issues. Please take the pain medication as directed and understand that the medications are meant to minimize pain in the initial post-operative phase but may not relieve pain completely.
- As the pain gradually improves you may transition over to Extra-Strength Tylenol which is a strong non-narcotic alternative for pain.
- You have also been given a prescription for **enteric coated Aspirin 325 mg** which you should take twice daily with food to decrease the risk of post-operative blood clot formation.
- If you have any side effects (i.e. Nausea, rash, trouble breathing) from medication discontinue its use and call our office.

#### Physical Therapy

- The need and timing of therapy will be determined by Dr. Montgomery and discussed at your first post-operative visit.
- A list of home exercises has been enclosed for you to do during your first week following surgery.

#### Follow Up

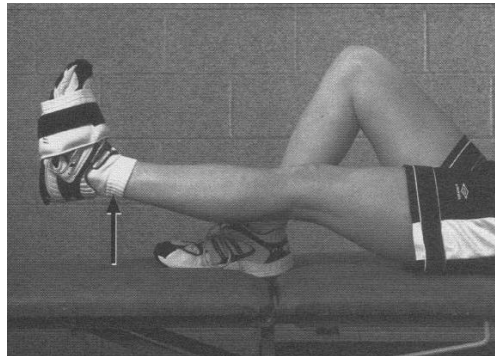
- You have likely already been scheduled for your first post-operative visit. If you have not received an appointment please contact the office to schedule an appointment 10-14 days after your surgery.
- You will be seen by Dr. Montgomery or his Physician Assistant for your first post-operative visit to review your intra-operative findings and to go over any questions you may have.
- Sutures / Staples will also be removed at that time.
- Call the office immediately if you develop a fever (>101.5), chills, excessive incision drainage, calf pain, or persistent numbness in leg.
- If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to call the office.

## **Home Knee Exercises**

### **Straight Leg Raise**

With your leg straight, lift your heel 12 inches from the ground and slowly back down. No weight is needed on the foot during the first 2 weeks after surgery.

3 sets of 15 reps as tolerated



### **Isometric Quad Contractions**

While lying on your stomach, place rolled up towel under ankle. Straighten knee against towel and hold for 15 seconds, stop, and then repeat.

3 sets of 15 reps as tolerated

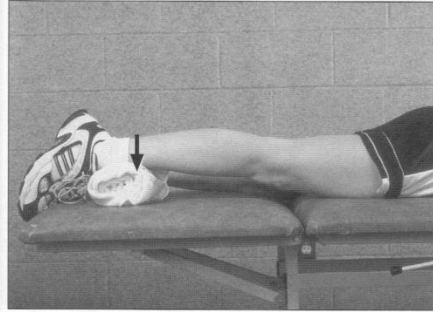


Figure 21.29 Quad set, prone.