

Stetson Powell Orthopedics and Sports Medicine
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KNEE ARTHROSCOPY

Post-Operative Instructions

I greatly appreciate the opportunity to do your surgery. My staff and I will do everything we can to ensure your comfort and safety during your surgery. Please read over these simple instructions prior to your surgery.

1. **DRESSINGS:** The dressing or white stocking around your knee should be kept on until your first post-operative visit. The white compressive stocking will help decrease swelling. After your visit, we will place an Ace wrap around your knee which should be worn for the first 2 weeks after surgery to help reduce swelling. The paper strips (steri-strips) over the incisions will fall off or can be removed at 7-10 days after your surgery.
2. **SHOWERING/BATHING:** Once the post-operative dressing is removed, it is acceptable to shower. We recommend that plastic wrap (e.g., Saran Wrap) be wrapped around the knee for the first 10 days to protect it from getting directly wet. Once the incisions are completely healed, you may get the knee wet in the shower. If the strips are still in place, they will begin peeling off, at which time you may remove them completely. Please wait three weeks before using a bathtub, pool or Jacuzzi. Do not immerse your knee in water for the first 10 days.
3. **BLEEDING:** In some cases, oozing from the incision sites may persist for several hours. If bleeding continues or appears to be excessive, even though the dressing and compressive stocking are in place, please contact our office. There is a physician on call 24 hours each day. If the paper-like strips covering the incision sites are removed too soon, it may remove the clot covering the wound, causing bleeding.
4. **SWELLING:** It is common to experience temporary swelling around the knee joint, which can cause stiffness and discomfort. This may last for days or weeks after the surgery. To minimize the swelling, use an ice pack

for approximately 20 minutes every two hours for the first 48-72 hours after surgery and then as necessary to reduce swelling. It is also helpful to elevate the leg on 1-2 pillows while sleeping or lying down and to wear the compressive stocking as mentioned.

5. **RELIEF OF PAIN:** For moderate to severe pain, a prescription for Vicodin (Hydrocodone) or a similar medication will be provided to you prior to surgery. Take 1-2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed, not to exceed two tablets within four hours. Do not take on an empty stomach and do not drink alcohol while using the prescription pain medication. If you should experience any untoward side effects, please stop the medication and contact our office.

6. **DIET:** Following your surgery, drink lots of liquids and eat somewhat bland, nutritious foods for the first 24-48 hours. Progress to your usual diet as tolerated. Remember that an adequate diet is essential for the healing process.

7. **NAUSEA AND VOMITING:** Although this is unusual, both can be experienced after anesthesia and/or pain medications given during surgery. If you have a known tendency for this, please discuss it with your anesthesiologist prior to surgery. If this continues for several hours, please contact our office.

8. **DROWSINESS:** After anesthesia, drowsiness may persist for several hours. It generally should not be a cause for concern.

9. **ACTIVITY:** You were provided with crutches to be able to use for your comfort. Unless specifically instructed otherwise, you may discontinue use as soon as you are comfortable walking without them (usually within the first 3-4 days). Do straight leg lift exercises by lifting the leg with the knee straight while lying down. Do this ten times at least 3-4 times per day. Let pain be your guide in regard to how much walking and exercise you do. During the first 7-10 days, the goal is to decrease swelling, increase comfort, and begin strengthening.

10. **COMMON COMPLAINTS AFTER SURGERY:** It is not uncommon to feel liquid within the knee as a result of the surgical procedure. In most cases, the body reabsorbs all fluid. Also, occasional clicking with movement may occur as a result of the muscle that supports the knee readjusting. Time, and your strengthening exercises may alleviate this.

11. **POST-OPERATIVE OFFICE VISIT:** A post-operative appointment should be scheduled to see me within 3-4 days after your surgery. If this has not been done, please contact our office at (818) 848-3030.

12. **ICING:** After the surgery, it is advised that you put an ice pack on the knee (front and back) for 15-20 minutes, every 2-3 hours while awake.

If you have any other questions, please give us a call in the office at (818) 848-3030.

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