

## **Instructions Following ACL Reconstruction**

### **1. When to contact Dr. Faulkner's team:**

- Excessive bleeding; unrelenting pain; excessive wound drainage (mild drainage or spotting is normal for 3-4 days postop); persistent numbness or tingling in operative extremity; temperature of  $>101^{\circ}$  F; increasing redness or swelling; calf pain, tenderness, or swelling

### **2. Dressings/wound care:**

- Remove gauze dressing 2 days postop.
- Leave white sticky strips in place until 1<sup>st</sup> postop appointment.
- Ok to shower 2 days postop. Do not submerge your incisions.

### **3. Blood Clot Prevention:**

- Wear compression stockings for 14 days postop. Remove for hygiene and for 2 hours/day to allow the skin to breathe.
- Take Aspirin 325 mg for 14 days.

### **4. Brace:**

- Wear locked in full extension at all times, including at night.
- Unlock at least 3x/day for knee range of motion.
- Ok to remove for hygiene.

**5. Weight Bearing:** Ok to place full weight on operative leg immediately after surgery with the knee brace locked in extension and using crutches. Wean off the crutches as tolerated.

### **6. Activity after surgery:**

- Elevate leg above heart level as much as possible to help reduce swelling.
- Start knee range of motion exercises the day after surgery (Goal is 0-90° of flexion by the 1st postop visit).
- Quad sets and straight leg raises should be performed at least 3x daily.

**7. Restrictions/Driving:** No driving unless cleared by Dr. Faulkner. No lifting, pushing, pulling, or carrying objects  $> 10$  lbs. Do not climb, stoop, crawl, or kneel.

### **8. Cold therapy/Ice:**

- Apply an ice pack or cold therapy unit to knee 30 minutes 6 x daily to help reduce pain and swelling.
  - Do not apply to bare skin. Be sure to have an ACE wrap or wash cloth between ice pack and skin to avoid frostbite.
- Remove for 30 minutes every 2 hours.



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## 9. Pain medication:

- Take 1-2 tabs of the prescribed pain medicine with food every 4-6 hours as needed. Take the medication sparingly and discontinue as soon as possible.
- Common side effects of narcotics: constipation, drowsiness, nausea and confusion. If you experience severe nausea, itching, dizziness or other adverse reactions, call Dr. Faulkner.
- Increase your fiber intake (fruits, vegetable, grains) and use an over the counter stool softener (such as docusate or Senna-S) if you are having constipation.
- Substitute Tylenol and/or Ibuprofen or Aleve if you do not have any contraindication to taking these. **Maximum dose/day of Tylenol is 1000 mg every 8 hours and Ibuprofen 800 mg every 8 hours.** Stomach upset, GI ulcers and allergic reactions are the most common adverse reactions to anti-inflammatories. You should not take more than 3000 mg of Tylenol in a 24 hour period.

**10. Diet:** Anesthesia can cause temporary nausea after surgery. Begin with light with clear liquids or soft foods after surgery to minimize upset stomach. Drink at least 6-8 glasses of water daily.

**Website URL:** [nathanfaulknermd.com](http://nathanfaulknermd.com)

**Postop instruction videos URL:** [nathanfaulknermd.com/postop](http://nathanfaulknermd.com/postop)

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*Videos to watch:*

1. *Post Op: Get to Know Your Knee Brace*
2. *Post Op: Knee Home Exercise Program*
3. *Shoulder & Knee Arthroscopy Post Op Wound Care Instructions*



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Please feel free to contact our office at any time!

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