

Post-operative Instructions - Knee Replacement

Wound Care/Dressings:

1. You may remove the dressing 48 hours after surgery and shower when the dressing has been removed.
 - a. **DO NOT** submerge your knee in water such as a bathtub or swimming pool.
2. Expect minimal bloody drainage. You may use a sterile bandage or additional dry dressing as needed.

Medication:

1. Take your pain medication as needed, but not more than every 4 hours.
 - a. **DO NOT** drive operative machinery or make important legal decisions while taking narcotics or muscle relaxants.
2. You will be required to also take Aspirin 325 mg once daily for four weeks. Should you have a medical condition that requires a different medication, you may be given Xarelto or Coumadin.
3. Follow any other prescriptions as directed.
4. You may resume your home medications unless otherwise directed.

Diet:

1. Progress to your normal diet as tolerated.
2. Narcotics can slow down your digestive system. It is recommended you take Colace 100mg, a stool softener, twice daily to prevent constipation.
 - a. MiraLAX can be used with Colace twice daily if you are still having constipation.

Activities:

1. You may resume activities with weight bearing as tolerated.
 - a. This means you can apply up to full body weight only if you feel that you are able to.
2. Use a walker or crutches when you walk for support as needed, typically for the first 2-3 weeks.
3. Practice range of motion exercise (flexion and extension) 2-3 times a day.
4. Keep the operative knee elevated above your heart when sitting to help reduce swelling.
 - a. Work on keeping your leg straight by putting a pillow under your heel, **NOT** under the knee.
5. Ice your knee for 20 minutes every 2-3 hours. There should always be a cloth barrier between the ice pack and your skin.
6. Out-patient physical therapy will begin after your two-week follow-up visit.

Follow-up Care:

1. You should have an appointment scheduled for 1-2 weeks after surgery. If not, please call your follow-up clinic to schedule an appointment as soon as possible.
2. After a knee replacement, you will be required to take an antibiotic one hour before other procedures such as dental cleanings, colonoscopies, pap-smears, etc.
 - a. Should you need a prescription, please contact the clinic you are following up at.
3. If you notice any unusual symptoms or have any concerns call the clinic you are following up at.
4. If there is an emergency, call 911 or visit your nearest Emergency Room.