

Initial Rehabilitation Following ACL Reconstruction Surgery

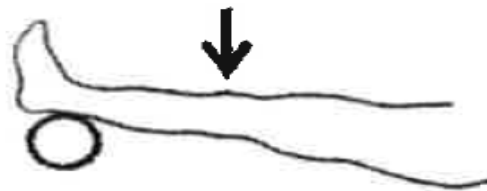
This handout provides an overview of the first week after ACL reconstruction (further information will be provided at post-op appointments).

Day of surgery:

- You will be provided with prescription for pain medication. Most people need this for 3-5 days.
- Additionally, take 2 Aleve twice daily for the first week. This over-the-counter medication can be taken in combination with the prescription pain medication. The Aleve will help minimize pain and swelling.
- You will leave the hospital with crutches and a knee immobilizer. You should use both of these when up until instructed otherwise at first post-op appointment.

First week after surgery: major emphasis is to minimize swelling as well as work on range of motion of the knee.

- Activity – stay off your feet as much as possible. For the first 5 days, you should only be up to use the restroom. Keep your leg elevated above your heart as much as possible. When up, you need to use your crutches and wear knee immobilizer. You can put full weight as tolerated on the surgical leg.
- Use cryocuff when elevating your leg. The top strap should be snug and the bottom strap should be loose.
- Range of motion activities: These should be done every 3-4 hours when awake.
 - Full Extension: MOST IMPORTANT range of motion exercise in the first week. Prop your heel on the cryocuff canister. Press down on your thigh. Hold for 20-30 seconds. You should be able to fully straighten your leg at the time of the first post-op appointment.

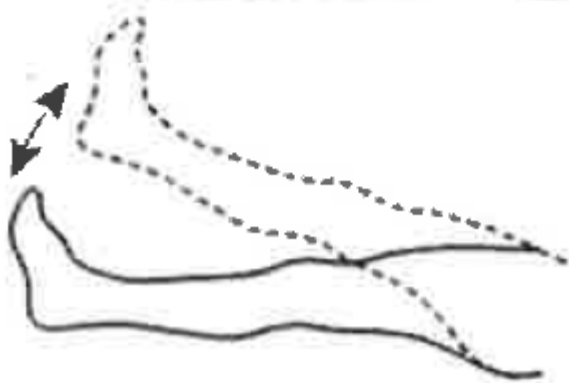


- Assisted knee bends: (have someone help you move your knee)



- If you have a hamstring graft, you should have someone bend your knee to 90 degrees. Hold this for 20-30 seconds.
- If you have a patellar tendon graft, you should have someone bend your knee as far as tolerated, you may bend the knee past 90 degrees.

- Strengthening exercise: every 3-4 hours when awake
 - Straight leg raise: while lying on your back, tighten your front thigh muscle and raise it 12 inches. Repeat 10-15 times.



Normal course during the first week: Expect some swelling and discomfort in the knee. This will be minimized by elevating the leg. You may also notice some bleeding and saturation of the dressing. You can change the dressing as needed but leave the steri-strips (tan or white strips applied directly to the skin) in place.

Any other questions, call Dr. O'Shea: 503-320-7283 (cell phone – no text messages please)

SIDE EFFECTS OF ANESTHESIA: You may experience nausea, sore throat, and drowsiness. A responsible adult should be with you for the next 24 hours. Rest quietly for the remainder of the day. **DO NOT** drink alcohol for the next 24 hours or while taking any pain medications. **DO NOT** drive a car, make any legal decisions or operate machinery for 24 hours after having anesthesia or sedation.

Instructions Given By: _____

Patient Released To: _____ Date: _____