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Knee Surgery Post Operative Instructions

General:

- ◆ **Ice! Ice! Ice!** To the surgical knee to prevent swelling. Use ice 20 minutes on / 20 minutes off diligently for 3-4 days, then as needed. If you have a Cold Therapy pad make sure it does not touch the skin directly. Use a light towel under the pad.
- ◆ To help reduce swelling, elevate the knee above the level of your heart using 3 pillows.
- ◆ There may be some bleeding from the incisions for the first 48 hours. If this persists longer contact your doctor.
- ◆ If you had a block, your leg may be numb after the operation. Usually this wears off by 24 hours. Contact the doctor if this persists longer than 48 hours.
- ◆ If you are given white compression stockings (TED hose), please wear them until the first post operative visit.
- ◆ If you are experiencing any of the following call our office or the doctor on call immediately:
 - ✓ **Fever greater than 101 degrees F, chills**
 - ✓ **Excessive redness, swelling, or drainage from incisions**
 - ✓ **Calf pain/tenderness**

Medications:

- ◆ You will be discharged with a prescription for pain medicine. Let us know in advance if you are running out. Refills are NOT handled on the weekend.
- ◆ You may use Tylenol as needed for milder pain instead of the prescribed medication, or you can supplement the prescribed medication with Ibuprofen 600mg every 6 hours.
- ◆ Pain medication can be constipating. You may use an over-the-counter laxative or stool softner (Colace, Metamucil, etc.) as needed until your bowel functions returns to normal.
- ◆ Take a Baby Aspirin (81mg) daily until seen in the office to help prevent blood clots from forming in your legs.
- ◆ May resume pre-op medications (or) Other: _____

Wound Care: The procedure you had or how large your incision is will determine how to care for the wound, see checked item below.

- 48 hours after surgery, you may change dressings and shower as needed. **DO NOT REMOVE THE ADHESIVE STRIPS OVER THE WOUNDS.** No ointments or lotions! No baths or hot tubs!
- Keep the dressing on and dry until 1st post-op visit. Do not remove! You may wrap in sealed plastic as to not get the dressing wet when you shower 3 days after surgery.

Depending on the procedure that was performed, you should...

- Wear the brace for _____
- Use crutches for _____
- Weight bearing _____
- Range of motion limitations _____
- Physical therapy will begin _____
- CPM machine, start at 0-40 degrees the day after surgery and increase at least 10 degrees per day, more if tolerated. Use the CPM for 4-6 hours per day.

Follow-up Appointment:

- ◆ Please make sure your post-op appointment is made 7-10 days after your surgery! If not, please call the office to schedule.

Patient signature: _____ R.N. _____ Date: _____

Please call if you have any problems or questions!
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Frequently Asked Questions

May I drive?

You may not drive for 24 hours after your operation, or while taking narcotic pain medications such as Vicodin and Percocet.

What/when can I eat?

We suggest that you eat lightly the first 24 hours after surgery. Try to drink lots of clear liquids.

When can I resume my regular medications?

You may resume your medications when you get home, unless otherwise instructed.

What is an adverse reaction to a pain medication?

Rash, itching, dizziness, nausea/vomiting, constipation. Call your doctor if these problems occur.

May I drink alcohol?

You may not drink alcohol for the 24 hour period following your surgery, nor are you allowed to drink alcohol while taking narcotic pain medicine.

How much pain should I expect?

Everyone will experience different amounts of pain but, following your surgery, you can expect to feel pain after the numbing medicine has worn off. This will probably last at least several days, but should gradually improve.

When should I take my pain medicine?

Pain medicine should be taken only as directed by your physician. Begin pain pills before the pain gets out of control, as it takes 30-45 minutes for it to take effect. Remember, pain pills are designed to make the pain tolerable-not to fully take away it away.

Pain pills may produce some loss of judgement and coordination; therefore it is best to limit your activities until the effects wear off. Sometimes pain medication can cause nausea and constipation. You may use over-the-counter treatments for this. To avoid nausea, we recommend that you eat something before taking your pain pills. To avoid constipation, increase your fluid intake, and you may use a stool softener or laxative.

When should I expect to return to work?

You may return to (sedentary) work or school 2-3 days after surgery of pain is tolerable. Return to heavy labor or excessive ambulatory activities will be determined by your doctor.

Please call if you have any problems or questions!

303-321-1333