

Knee Arthroscopy

Pain:

You should expect some pain following any operation. You will be given prescriptions for pain medicines and instructions for using it. Using the anti-inflammatory medicine (ibuprofen) around the clock for the first few days will hopefully decrease the need to take the narcotic medicine (norco). If your pain is not well controlled by the medicine, you should call our office during normal business hours.

Dressings:

Your knee will be covered with a bandage when you leave the surgical center. You should keep this bandage dry and then take it off on the third day after surgery unless you are told not to. The small wounds on the knee should be then covered with Band-aids or a small dressing. If you desire, the knee can be rewrapped with an ace wrap. It is ok to shower and get the area wet after the large bandage is removed, but do not soak underwater or scrub the area.

Swelling:

You will experience some swelling around the operative site and sometimes even into the leg. Elevation is the most effective way to help with this. Elevation should be done with the extremity above the heart. This is usually accomplished lying in the supine position and elevating the leg on pillows. Ice applied for 15 to 20 minutes at a time every hour is also helpful in decreasing the swelling.

Activities After Surgery:

Activities after surgery depend on what has been done to your knee. For most simple arthroscopy cases, weight-bearing is OK. You will be given crutches if you need them. You should work on moving the knee trying to obtain maximal bending and straightening as soon as possible. It is okay to get on an exercise bicycle or to walk to slowly limber up the knee and these activities can be followed by icing. Thigh muscle contractions (so that the leg is lifted straight up into the air) and ankle pumps (moving the ankle back and forth) should be done at least 20 times at a sitting, 3 times a day.

Physical Therapy:

Weight-bearing is allowed if you did not have a meniscus repair.

If possible, make an appointment to physical therapy early because it may take one week or more to see the therapist. Usually therapy begins 7-10 days after your surgery.

Complications:

A low-grade fever (up to 101F or 38.3C) is common up to postoperative day 4-5, but if it exceeds this or lasts longer, notify our office. The fever will go away with coughing, deep breathing, and a fever reducer such as acetaminophen. Also, if you feel increasing pain, notice redness or drainage from the wounds, or any other concerns, please call our office as soon as you can.

Follow-up Appointments:

You will be given a follow-up appointment to return to the clinic, about 10-14 days after your surgery.