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Open Knee Surgery: Postoperative Instructions  
Dr. Stephen Shively

Diet

- You may resume your regular diet as soon as possible

Medication

- Take the pain medication as prescribed
- Take pain medication with food
- While taking pain medications, you may NOT operate a vehicle, heavy machinery, or appliances
- While taking pain medication, you may NOT drink alcoholic beverages
- If you have any reactions to your medications, stop taking them and call my office
- If you are not allergic, take one aspirin 81mg twice a day to help prevent blood clots
- Please keep in mind that constipation is a very common side effect of taking narcotic pain medication. Take precautions to prevent constipation:
  - Drink plenty of water (6-8 glasses of 8 oz. a day)
  - Avoid alcohol, caffeine, and dairy products
  - Eat plenty of fiber (fruits, vegetables, and whole grains)
  - Take an over the counter stool softener (Colace or Dulcolax)

Activity

- RANGE OF MOTION
  - \_\_\_\_\_ You may bend your knee as much as the dressings will allow
  - \_\_\_\_\_ You are in a knee immobilizer/brace. Range of motion is limited
- WEIGHT BEARING
  - \_\_\_\_\_ You may weight bear as tolerated
  - \_\_\_\_\_ You are partial weight bearing
  - \_\_\_\_\_ You are non-weight bearing

- You may practice quadriceps muscle tightening and straight leg raises several times every hour.
- Please continue to move your ankle up and down and tighten and relax your calf muscles several times every hour to help reduce swelling and prevent blood clots.
- You may use your crutches for balance as needed until your first post operative visit.
- The optimal position of the leg after surgery is for you to be lying flat with your ankle higher than your knee and higher than your heart, in an effort to reduce swelling.
- **It is important to continuously elevate your knee above your heart until your swelling is completely down.**
- **Please keep ice applied to the knee for the first 72 hours or as long as pain or swelling persists. Do not apply ice directly to skin, or allow water to leak on your dressing.**

### Showering

- You may shower 3 days after surgery unless told otherwise. DO NOT immerse the knee under water and DO NOT rub the incision. If you have a brace, you may remove it to shower. Keep your knee straight in the shower.
- You may sponge bathe for the first 72 hours, taking care to keep the dressing clean and dry.

### Dressing Care

- Keep the dressing clean and dry.
- It is normal to get some bloody wound seepage through the bandage. DO NOT BE ALARMED.
- If the dressing gets soaked with wound seepage, please reinforce with a dry sterile dressing.
- Loosen the ace wrap around your knee if it becomes too tight or painful.
- Remove all dressings 7 days after surgery. If there is still some wound seepage, apply a fresh STERILE gauze over the incisions and secure with tape or an ace wrap, otherwise you may leave open to air.
- If you have sutures, do not touch them

### Emergency/Follow-Up

- Please notify my office at 317-477-6683 if you develop any fever (101 deg or above), unexpected warmth, redness or swelling. Please call if your toes become cold, purple, numb, or there is excessive bleeding.
- If you do not have a follow up appointment scheduled, please call 317-477-6683 to be seen 7-10 days after surgery.
- No pain medications refills can be provided after 3pm on Fridays or over the weekend.

**I have read and understand the above discharge instructions.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Patient or Responsible Party**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

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