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Arthroscopic Knee Meniscectomy Post-Operative Instructions:

GENERAL

- Use crutches to walk initially for support and comfort and start to bend the knee **gently** as you can tolerate to prevent stiffness (refer to the “Heel Slide” exercise sheet provided).
- You can put down weight on your foot unless **SPECIFICALLY** instructed not to do so (for example, if you had a meniscal repair/suturing or knee cartilage repair procedure).
- If you do not have a cold therapy machine, use ice packs on the knee 20 minutes per hour while awake to decrease swelling and diminish pain.
- Keep your knee **elevated** as much as possible above heart level to allow gravity to diminish swelling.
- You will **not** need a brace for **most** routine knee arthroscopy procedures involving the meniscus unless you had a meniscal repair/suturing procedure or a ligament reconstruction.
- Remember that arthroscopy is performed by pumping in a lot of fluid into the knee. Therefore, fluid escaping through the small incisions (portals) is **entirely normal** to occur after surgery.

MEDICATIONS

- Follow Dr. Iyengar’s pain protocol!
- Start taking pain medication when you get home from surgery and then continue to use it **every 4-6 hours** as needed to control the pain.
- It is best to **prevent** post-operative pain by using your medication on a regular basis for the first 24-48 hours after surgery then tapering off.
- Be sure to take a stool softener (docusate or “Colace”) as prescribed to prevent constipation while you are taking narcotics, as this is a **common side effect**.
- If you experience nausea after surgery, use the medication (ondansetron or “Zofran”) as prescribed until it resolves, typically within 48 hours.
- Take an over-the-counter anti-inflammatory (“NSAID”) medication, ibuprofen (Advil/Motrin) in combination with your narcotic pain medication to reduce inflammation.
- The recommended dose of ibuprofen is 600 mg (3 tablets) by mouth **three** times daily.
- Take ibuprofen **with food** to decrease the risk of stomach irritation.
- Please note, ibuprofen can cause serious GI bleeding so **STOP** taking it if you experience any severe stomach pain or bleeding in your stools and call Dr. Iyengar’s office immediately.

SHOWER

- You may shower on **post-operative day 3** but you **MUST** have someone available to help you avoid falling or slipping.
- Be sure to remove the ACE Wrap and surgical dressings **carefully**.
- Pat dry the incisions after your shower and cover them with Band-Aids.
- You can put the ACE Wrap back on your knee for gentle compression in the first week post-operatively but make sure it is **CLEAN** and **DRY**.
- Do **not** put any creams, lotions or antibiotic agents on the wounds.

WHEN CAN I?

- You can typically stop using the crutches between **2-3 days** post-operatively as soon as you are comfortable.
- You will be able to resume driving as soon as you are **OFF** narcotics and feel comfortable after surgery (**~4-7 days typically**).
- Most patients require **at least** three days to recover from the effects of surgery and anesthesia.
- Some patients may return to work as soon as **4-7 days** post-operatively and others require extensive time away from work if “limited duty” is not available.

POST-OPERATIVE VISIT

- You will have your 1st post-operative visit **4 to 7 days after surgery**.
- At the visit, we will change your dressings, inspect your wounds and remove the sutures (stitches) in your knee.
- You will be given your post-operative prescription from Dr. Iyengar to start Physical Therapy with all of the guidelines for your therapist to follow.
- We will review your arthroscopic photos to show you what was done at your surgery.
- If you have any questions regarding your surgical recovery, please write them down so that you remember to ask Dr. Iyengar during this appointment

PHYSICAL THERAPY

- The typical therapy program will be about **6-12 weeks**.
- The goals are to regain range of motion and quadriceps strength as soon as possible.
- Dr. Iyengar will talk to you about the specifics of your physical therapy protocol when he sees you at your 1st post-operative visit.

CONTACT OUR OFFICE IF:

- You **do not** already have a post-operative follow-up appointment; please call the appointment desk at **(209) 946-7200** in the first weekday after surgery to schedule.
- Any signs of infection should be reported immediately: **increased swelling, redness, drainage from incisions (usually thick, cloudy pus, not clear liquid secondary to the arthroscopy), warmth, fever (T > 101.8), chills, or severe pain unrelieved by prescribed medications.**