



ACL DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

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1. **Activity:** Following your knee surgery, you may want to limit your activities for the first 5 to 7 days (i.e.: not returning to work or school). You may walk as comfort allows with the assistance of crutches and continued use of the knee brace (you will be informed if you need to limit weight-bearing).
2. **CPM Machine:** If your doctor has recommended the use of a CPM (constant passive motion) machine, it will be rented for approximately 1 week. Our office will have placed the order and a representative from the company will contact you. The company will arrange a convenient time to deliver the machine and instruct you on its use. You can start using the CPM the day after your surgery. The goal is to gradually get your knee bending comfortably at 90 degrees. Try to use the CPM for a total of 4 to 6 hours a day, broken up into 2 to 3 hour increments. Remember that you must remove the brace when using the CPM. If your insurance does not cover the CPM, you will be given the option to rent the machine or do a different flexion exercise in lieu of the CPM.
3. **Cold Therapy:** Generally, this is most beneficial when used continuously during the first week for comfort, and then as needed. The pad should be applied over the white stocking and under the brace, just as it was applied following your surgery. You may use this type of cold therapy as often as you'd like. If you are using an ice pack, this can be applied for 20 minutes at a time, as often as every hour, if desired. The main benefit from cold therapy is increased comfort and decreased swelling.
4. **Pain Medications:** Generally, you will be prescribed 2 different medications for use at home after surgery. They are:
 - 1) Narcotic pain reliever;
 - 2) Keflex (Cephalexin): An antibiotic; Take first tablet about 4 hours after leaving the surgery facility, then 1 tablet every 6 hours until finished. 3 tablets are prescribed to prevent infection, take until they are gone.Do not take on an empty stomach and do not drink alcohol while using the prescription pain medication. If you should experience any untoward side effects, please stop the medication and contact our office. If a refill is needed, please contact our office during business hours.
5. **Brace/Crutches:** The knee brace is for your protection while healing and muscle strengthening occur. It should always be worn when walking and putting weight on your operative leg. It is not necessary while lying down and must be removed while using the CPM machine. You will require this particular brace for up to 4 weeks after surgery. The crutches can be discontinued as soon as this is comfortable, usually between 1 to 2 weeks after surgery (you will be instructed if longer use is needed).

6. **Dressing Change:** You can change your surgical dressing 72 hours after surgery. After removing the brace and cooling pad, pull down the white stocking to expose the incision sites. Discard the entire white padded dressing, leaving the steri-strips in place on the skin. Clean gauze should be placed over the incision sites. This will help keep the wound clean and dry. The white stocking, cooling pad and the brace should be reapplied.
7. **Showering:** For the first 14 days after surgery it is necessary to protect the incision site from getting wet. You may shower 3 days after surgery as long as the knee is kept dry by wrapping with plastic wrap or a garbage bag. After 2 weeks, you may get the knee wet in the shower, patting the steri-strips dry. You must wait 3 weeks after surgery before submerging the leg in a bath, pool, or Jacuzzi, as long as the incisions are completely closed. The stocking should be removed for showering, but should be worn throughout the first week to decrease swelling.
8. **Signs of Infection:** With any surgery it is important to be aware of signs of infection which can include: unusual looking drainage, increased redness and tenderness around the incision sites, fever (101 degrees or above) and chills, or a sudden decrease in flexibility. It is a good idea to check the wounds 1 to 2 times a day. Also, be aware of excessive bleeding, numbness and/or tingling of the feet and/or toes. Please make your doctor aware as soon as possible should you develop any of these possible signs.
9. **First Postoperative visit:** A postoperative appointment should be scheduled to see the doctor 6-10 days after your surgery. Please contact our office to schedule at (303) 321-1333 or toll free 1-888-900-1333. At your appointment, you will have x-rays taken of your knee, your dressing will be changed, and Dr. Bazaz will examine you. At this time physical therapy will be discussed. Outpatient physical therapy generally begins 2 weeks after your surgery, and may continue for 3 to 4 months depending on your progress.
10. **Questions:** If you have further question, please contact our office at (303) 321-1333 or toll free 1-888-900-1333