

Knee Arthroscopy FAQ'S

Can I take a shower? After 72 hours from surgery, you may take a shower and the leg may get wet (unless otherwise instructed). **DO NOT REMOVE ANY BUTTERFLY TAPES.** You may either sit on a chair or steady yourself on handrails. No immersion of the incisions in water is allowed for 14 days post op or until your stitches are removed. This means – no soaking the leg in a bathtub, hot tub, whirlpool or swimming in the ocean/pool.

Can I drive? If the surgery was performed on your left leg and you drive and automatic transmission car, you may drive 2-3 days after surgery as long as you are not taking narcotic pain medication. If you had surgery on the right leg, or you drive a manual transmission, you may drive once you have adequate strength in the leg. This usually occurs between 7-10 days post op. I recommend you test your driving ability in an empty parking lot with supervision until you determine whether or not you can drive safely.

When do I start therapy? Therapy should begin after your first post operative visit. You should call for an appointment immediately after your first post operative visit. Therapy can be done anywhere that is convenient for you and paid for by your insurance. A list of facilities is available in the office.

Do I need crutches? **UNLESS OTHERWISE INSTRUCTED**, we encourage full weight bearing immediately post op. This means you may put your full weight on the leg. You do not *need* crutches, but if you need them to steady yourself, this is fine. We prefer that you put weight on the leg to maintain strength and to encourage healing to occur.

Do I need pain medication? Most patients use pain medication for the first few days after surgery. Most patients change over to plain Tylenol or Advil during the first 7-10 days. Some patients require pain medications for longer periods of time.

My leg hurts! I thought it would be better right away! Most people's expectation following knee arthroscopy is that they will be back to normal within a day or two. This is not what most people experience. Although some people feel much better right away, many people notice they are not back to normal for 4 weeks or more. This is especially true for those who have "wear and tear" and degenerative changes. The knee may be swollen and sore for several weeks. Don't judge the effectiveness of the surgery until you have given the knee ample time to recover from the surgery.

How long until I can do my normal activities? Common sense is the rule. In most cases, you cannot damage the knee by doing too much, however, you **CAN** make it hurt and swell. If you do something that makes it swell and hurt, don't panic. You probably just overdid it a little. Use ice, elevate and rest the knee.

What should I worry about? The most serious complication that can occur after an arthroscopy is a blood clot in the calf. This is easily prevented if you avoid lying in bed for days after the surgery and instead walk around a little. Some muscle soreness in the calf is normal because you are walking in an unusual way following surgery. You should worry that you may have a clot if you have swelling in your whole leg, redness and exquisite tenderness in the calf. This complication is rare, but should be taken seriously. As always, if you are concerned, call the office.

Can I get a note for work or school? Notes for missing school and work are available upon request from the office.