



Orthopaedic Specialists of Modesto

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## ***ACL SURGERY INSTRUCTION SHEET***

### **AFTER YOUR SURGERY:**

1. Your knee will be quite stiff for the first few days.
2. Stay off the affected leg as much as possible for the first 48 hours
3. You may begin to put weight on the leg after the first day with your immobilizer on.
4. Keep your leg elevated above your heart as much as possible for the first week after surgery.
5. Apply ice to your knee for the first 48 hours after surgery. Wrap the ice in two bags to avoid getting the bandage wet.
6. You may use ice packs longer if they help the pain. If you have a cold pack set-up, make sure it is filled with ice water.

### **PAIN CARE:**

1. Some patients will have a pain buster placed at the time of surgery. This is a small catheter inserted into the area of the repair. It has a small reservoir at one end that pumps local pain medicine into the wound for 48 hours.
2. You should expect some swelling in the foot and discoloration in the leg on the affected side, this is perfectly normal.
3. Take your pain medication as directed by your prescription. Do not wait until the pain is intolerable to take the medication.

It will take between 30-60 minutes to begin working, so take it accordingly.

### **IF TAKING ORAL PAIN MEDICATION:**

1. Follow instructions for use printed on prescription.
2. Do not take pain medications on an empty stomach.
3. Do not drive or drink alcoholic beverages when taking pain medication.
4. If medication causes a reaction, such as nausea or skin rash, stop the medication and call your physician.

### **DIET:**

1. Drink lots of nonalcoholic liquids and then begin a light diet.
2. Resume a normal diet the day after your surgery.

### **WOUND CARE:**

1. Remove the bandage after 3 days. The incisions may continue to ooze a small amount.
2. Leave the tape strips on the wounds.
3. Pull the clear adhesive off around the catheter and remove the small catheter. Your pain may increase after the catheter is removed.

### **BATHING:**

1. You may take a shower 72 hours (approx. 3 days) after surgery. Wrap saran wrap around your knee to keep it dry.
2. Avoid soaking in a bathtub, pool, or spa for 2 weeks.

### **ACTIVITY:**

1. Begin to gently bend and straighten the knee as soon as you can. Your motion should improve a little bit every day.
2. You should be able to fully straighten the knee and bend to about 90 degrees (roughly a right angle) by the time of your first office visit after surgery.
3. Be sure to spend at least 15 minutes each day working on completely straightening your knee. This is critical to resuming normal walking.

4. Begin doing straight leg lifts after 4 days. Start by sitting or lying on the floor, tightening your leg muscles and straightening your leg. Lift your leg about 6 inches off the floor and hold it for 3 seconds. Slowly lower your leg back down. Do this 20-30 times in the morning and evening. This will keep your thigh muscles from shutting down after surgery.

**CALL PHYSICIAN FOR:**

1. Temperature above 101 degrees or severe chilling.
2. Persistent nausea and vomiting.
3. Pain not relieved by oral medication.
4. Excessive bleeding or drainage on the dressing.
5. Any signs of infection at the incisions (redness, hot to touch, or tenderness). Some redness and swelling is normal.
6. Swelling, coldness, paleness, or blue color of toes (compare to your other foot).
7. Numbness or tingling in the operative leg after initial numbness following surgery has worn off.

*You must contact our office during business hours to have a prescription refilled or a new prescription dispensed. After hours (after 5:00 p.m. or on weekends), the on-call doctor will not give a refill or a new pain medication prescription.*

•Your surgeon can be reached at 524-4438, ext. 120 or 121, if you have any of the above problems or have any questions.