

What to Expect after ACL Surgery

- 1. You will have a straight leg immobilizer after surgery**
 - a. You will receive a smaller brace at your first post op visit
- 2. Physical therapy should start 2-5 days after surgery**
 - a. Incision inspection and dressing change
- 3. You will be instructed on weight bearing status before you are discharged**
 - a. 4 point gait
 - b. Non-weight bearing
- 4. Swelling:**
 - a. Very common after surgery
 - b. Elevate leg above your heart
 - c. Ice at least 5-6 times a day (20 minutes on 1 hour off)
 - d. Compression
 - i. Ace wrap
 - ii. Compression sleeve
 - e. Ankle pumps (while leg is elevated, repeatedly point and flex the foot)
 - i. This pushes swelling out of the leg and back into the lymph system
 - f. Swelling will come and go through out recovery
- 5. There will be post-surgical pain**
 - a. Acetaminophen and ibuprofen (if able to take NSAIDS) can be used in addition to the narcotic medication to help with post-surgical pain
 - b. Read through the pain management handout
 - c. Ice and elevation work hand in hand with narcotic medication for pain relief
- 6. Wound management:**
 - a. Keep steri strips on
 - b. Keep covered with non-adherent gauze pad
 - c. Call if the following arise
 - i. Increase in redness
 - ii. Warmth to touch
 - iii. Drainage
 - iv. Increase in pain for no reason
 - v. Fever above 101 degrees

7. Showering:

- a. You can shower 2-3 days after surgery
- b. Do not scrub incisions
- c. Let water run over incisions
- d. Pat dry
- e. Do not take steri strips off
- f. Cover as needed
- g. If you have sutures, they will be removed at your first post op visit

8. Driving depends on the following:

- a. Which leg surgery was on
- b. Must be off narcotic medication during the day
- c. Must be able to slam on the brakes
- d. Practice in a parking lot before you go on the roads

***If you have any questions or concerns, contact Sarah S at 651-351-2618**