



Discharge Instructions - Arthroscopic Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) Dr. Wulf

General:

- You have received anesthesia; rest and relax the day of surgery. Please be aware of possible dizziness and exercise caution when you are up. **A responsible adult must be with the patient for 24 hours following surgery for safety and falls prevention.**
- Begin with liquids, and advance diet as tolerated; avoid greasy and spicy foods.
- No important decisions or signing of legal documents for 24 hours. Do not operate power machinery.
- Do not drive for 24 hours following surgery or while taking narcotic pain medications.
- No alcoholic beverages for 24 hours, or while taking narcotics.
- If you are unable to urinate, feel uncomfortable, and it has been 8-10 hours since you last urinated, go to an urgent care or the ER.
- If you had a block, be sure to start your oral pain medication before it begins to wear off.

Nerve Block:

- If you have had a nerve block, be sure to start taking your pain medication *before* the block begins to wear off.
- Typically, a nerve block will last between 8-24 hours from the time of injection. Notify your surgeon if the nerve block lasts more than 48 hours.
- Do not use your operative extremity until the nerve block has worn off. Then, follow your surgeon's activity restrictions.

Activity:

- Keep your leg elevated with a pillow under your calf or ankle, not under the knee.
- Keep your operative extremity at or above the level of your heart for the first 2-3 days. This is the best position to reduce swelling.
- Use crutches and wear your knee immobilizer when walking.
 - You can wean from crutches as you can tolerate. Your physical therapist will be able to help you judge when you are ready to discontinue them completely. The goal is to not use crutches by your two week post op appointment.
- You may put full weight on your operative leg and bend your knee as far as you can tolerate after the nerve block has worn off.

Brace:

- Wear the immobilizer at all times (even when sleeping), except for showering and physical therapy exercises.
- It is likely that the brace will not fit as well after dressing is removed. If so, feel free to adjust the straps accordingly. If you have trouble with this, feel free to ask your physical therapist for assistance or contact our office at 952-456-7010 for help.

Physical Therapy:

Make an appointment for the next 3-7 days.

Dressing:

- Keep your dressing dry and intact as instructed.
- Your knee has an abundant amount of gauze/dressing on it. Do not be alarmed if range of motion feels limited secondary to this while the surgical dressing is still on.
- You may remove the dressing in 48 hours. You may remove the ace bandage, gauze, and yellow antibiotic film. Please leave steri-strips in place until your two week post op appointment, or until they fall off on their own.
- Wait to shower until initial surgical dressing is removed. Once it is removed, please cover your incisions with plastic wrap while showering to avoid incisions getting wet. Pat area dry with a clean towel after showers.
- Do not submerge your knee in water (bathtub, hot tub, pool, etc.) until your incisions healing has been cleared by your surgeon's office for these activities.

Ice:

- For 6 weeks: at least 3 times/day for 20 minutes. Do not exceed 20 minute increments. Leave at least 30 minutes in between icing sessions to avoid frost bite.

Pain/Medications:

- Expect to have pain following surgery. Pain level of 4-5/10 is our goal. The pain medication prescribed for you should provide relief, but often does not take all the pain away. The first few days following surgery can be the most painful. Just remember, it will get better.
- It is important to keep your pain under control. It is difficult to catch up with your pain if it becomes severe.
- Resume your preoperative medications per your physician. Refer to your medication list given to you at discharge.

Office Return:

- Please call the office (952-456-7000) on the first day or two after surgery to schedule a 2 week post-operative visit if it has not already been arranged. Most likely, it has already been arranged.

Report to Surgeon any of the following:

- Fever over 101 degrees for more than 24 hours
- Foul drainage, redness, or warmth at the operative site
- Large amount of bleeding or drainage
- Severe and uncontrolled pain
- Persistent nausea or vomiting
- Hives, rash or intolerance (Stop medications)

Who to Contact

- Contact information for Dr. Wulf:
 - Kristine Zwieg, PA-C
 - Jill Weinzettel – Care Coordinator
 - **952-456-7010**



- Our Orthopedic Urgent Care is available 7 days a week from 8 AM to 8PM, and can assist afterhours or on weekends should you need to be seen by an orthopedic provider. Phone number is 952-456-7000

**Call 911 or go to the nearest ER if you experience shortness of breath, redness, warmth, and extreme pain in the calf. These are signs of a blood clot.

If you have questions or concerns please contact your physician or our 24-hour answering service at 952-456-7000.

Other Instructions:

Nurse _____ Responsible Adult _____