

ACL Reconstruction FAQ

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WHERE WILL MY SURGERY TAKE PLACE?

- High Pointe Surgery Center; Lake Elmo, MN

WILL I STAY OVERNIGHT AFTER SURGERY?

- No, you will go home about an hour after surgery.

HOW WILL MY PAIN BE MANAGED AFTER SURGERY?

- It will be recommended that you take Tylenol (1000 mg 3x/day) and ibuprofen (600 mg 3x/day) around the clock
- Oxycodone, or another narcotic pain medication, will be prescribed to take as needed.
- Depending on the type of graft used, patients may have more or less pain in the first few days after surgery.
- Please see FAQ on pain management.

HOW IS THE ACL RECONSTRUCTED?

- The ACL is reconstructed using an ACL graft
- ACL graft options
 - Autograft: your own tissue. Patellar, quadriceps, hamstring tendons
 - Allograft: cadaver tissue.
- Dr. Schmiesing will reviewed which graft(s) would be the best choice for you based on your history, age, sport, activity level, and risk of reinjury.

WILL I HAVE ANY RESTRICTIONS AFTER SURGERY?

- Restrictions depend on if other surgery is needed at the time of ACL reconstruction
- After isolated **ACL reconstruction** with or without meniscectomy:
 - You will be in a hinged knee brace.
 - Weightbearing as tolerated will be allowed, though you may use crutches for a few days to week after surgery if needed
 - Range of motion will be unrestricted
 - Your brace will be discontinued by your physical therapist when your quad strength has returned, around 2-4 weeks
- After **ACL reconstruction and meniscus repair**
 - You will be in a hinged knee brace after surgery.
 - Weightbearing as tolerated will be allowed only with your knee braced locked straight. Crutches may be used as needed

- When you are not walking, you may unlock your brace and bend your knee
- Range of motion will be restricted to 0-90 degrees
- After 6 weeks, your brace will be discontinued and your range of motion will increase
- If you receive a brace in clinic before surgery, bring this to your surgery.

WILL I NEED PHYSICAL THERAPY?

- Physical therapy should start 2-3 days after surgery, schedule this before surgery
- You will likely be participating in physical therapy on some level for many months after surgery. This will help you return to sports as quick as possible.
- Progression with PT will be based on completing milestones.

WHEN CAN I RETURN TO SPORT?

- For competitive athletes, returning to sport specific training (practice), is on average around 9 months, range 6-12 months. Returning to competition ranges from 9-15 months.
- This return is based on getting symmetric strength and coordination back to protect yourself from repeat or new injury.
- It can take 1-2 months of practice to be ready for competition.
- For recreational athletes, returning to all activities is between 6-9 months
- All athletes will have the option for testing at the Training Haus at Eagan TCO for data to help decide when you are ready to return.

HOW WILL I MANAGE MY INCISION?

- The surgical dressing can be changed 3 days after surgery. You may then shower, let soap and water run over the incisions, do not scrub. Pat dry and replace a clean dressing.
- Physical therapy can also assist with your first dressing change
- Do not soak your incision until 4 weeks from surgery.

WILL I NEED MEDICATION TO PREVENT BLOOD CLOTS (DVT/PE)?

- No, typically anticoagulation medication is not prescribed after ACL surgery
- Walking and other exercises help prevent clots.
- If you have a history of DVT/PE, this should be discussed with Dr. Schmiesing to develop an individualized plan.

WHEN WILL FOLLOW UP BE?

- 10-14 days after surgery for a wound check
- 6 weeks after surgery to evaluate progress with PT and take xrays
- Then at 3, 6, 9, 12 months

WHERE TO GO WITH QUESTIONS?

- If you have questions for the surgical team, please call Dr. Schmiesing's Care Coordinator at 651-351-2621.
- To make an appointment, please call the main line, 651-439-8807