

## **Knee Arthroscopy, what do I do once I am home?**

As always, information like this is general. You should make sure your doctor agrees with this plan and has directed you to these instructions quite specifically. If you aren't sure, please ask.

You will have surgery as an out-patient more than likely. If you live a long way away or have a medical problem, you may spend the night in the hospital. You will have several ace wraps on your leg from your toes to about your knee that need to stay on until 72 hours after the surgery. At that time, the bandages may be removed. Do not be alarmed if there is excessive drainage from the bandage. When we do a knee arthroscopy, there is a lot of water put inside the knee that drains out of the little portal holes that are made for the introduction of the arthroscope. If you put 10-20 drops of blood in a gallon of water, it looks like a gallon of blood, but it is not. It is more water than it is blood, and if you have some drainage of the water and a small amount of blood to the outside bandage, it should not be alarming to you. This is more to be expected than not. Ice packs should be used every 4 hours for 30 minutes for the first 24 hours following surgery.

At 72 hours, you may remove the entire apparatus and bandage. You may take a shower, but not a bath. You may not swim in fresh or ocean water and you should not submerge the knee for any prolonged period of time in a whirlpool or other bathing device until the wounds are completely healed. However, letting the shower water run over the knee is fine, but then you should have a new sterile gauze dressing to place over the portal holes on the knee. Then use the cleanest of the three ace wraps to rewrap around the knee very gently. Do this daily until there is no further drainage. Then you may discontinue the bandages altogether.

In order to help try to prevent blood clots you should take an aspirin a day and wrap the ace bandage around your knee very minimally. As well, you should work on pumping your calf muscles and your foot up and down constantly (like pushing on the gas pedal in your car) throughout the surgery postoperative period. Also be sure to elevate the leg during the postoperative period. Be sure not to elevate by placing a pillow directly behind the knee as that may obstruct the blood flow.

Crutches should be used for comfort only and then discontinued when desired (unless otherwise discussed before or after surgery with Dr. Smith). Occasionally bone surface defects or cartilage repairs will require the use of crutches for a long period of time. This will be discussed postoperatively, as well as any exercises you may need to do.

You have been given pain medicine that can be taken 1-2 every 4-6 hours as needed for the pain. You may wish to add an Advil to this if it is making you sleepy. Take 1 Advil and 1 pain pill to avoid as much drowsiness as possible.

Please call the office at 359-0718 if you have any questions. When you come back to the office for your postoperative visit, please bring any pictures that were taken during the surgery and we will review those with you. Your instructions may vary from this so please use these instructions only if instructed to do so by the doctor.

