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ACL RECONSTRUCTION

Discharge / Post-Operative Appointment / Surgical Outcomes

Discharge is normally the morning following your surgery. However if you are feeling well it is possible to leave on the day of surgery. Your post op appointment is 2 weeks after surgery. If you do not have an appointment please contact my PA Bronwyn on 9230 6333 or bronwyn@coastalorthopaedics.com.au. If you are enrolled in the Surgical Outcomes System please complete the online questionnaires that will have been emailed to you.

Pain Relief / Medications

You have been prescribed a range of pain-killers by your Anaesthetist. In general, you should take paracetamol regularly (3-4 times per day), followed by anti-inflammatories if prescribed. Use strong painkillers such as for top-up pain relief as required. You can cease them as soon as the pain allows. Check with your nurse prior to discharge if you are unsure. If you are considered high risk for DVT or on the Oral Contraceptive Pill you will be prescribed a 2 week course of Aspirin.

Swelling / Icing

Some swelling of the knee is normal. However the sooner your swelling settles the better. Please ice your knee as many times per day as you can tolerate, ideally using your *BODYICE kit*. You should continue icing for as long as you knee remains swollen, which can be up to several weeks.

Concerns

We have an excellent practice nurse Cherie who will see you with me at your 2 week appointment, and will be happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have in the peri-operative period. If you are worried about your knee, if there is new redness or fever or if you develop significant calf pain or swelling please contact us immediately or attend your local doctor or emergency department.

Bandage / Dressings / Sutures

You will be discharged with a 'Tubigrip' compression stocking. Leave the waterproof sticky dressings in place. You may shower but still cover your dressings and keep them as dry as possible. If they get saturated or fall off, dry and clean your wound with antiseptic and replace with a similar dressing. You have 'dissolvable' sutures that do not require removal.

Crutches/Brace

You will need to use crutches after your surgery. If you have NOT had a meniscal repair you can weight bear and move your knee as tolerated. You can discard your crutches as soon as you can walk comfortably with a normal gait. If you HAVE had a meniscal repair I will instruct you regarding weight bearing/crutches. Normally the brace will need to be worn while walking but can be taken off when sitting/lying to allow exercise.

Rehabilitation / Physiotherapy

Please see the 'rehabilitation' section of my website www.drpeterdalessandro.com.au for exercises you should perform several times per day, immediately after discharge. You should see your physio as soon as possible after your surgery to start your guided program. Please inform me of who this is, or ask me for a referral. Your **priority is maintaining full knee extension** and focus on 'turning your quads back on'. **You should NEVER sleep with a pillow under your knee.** For elevation, place a pillow under your ankle and let your knee hang.

Return to Work/Driving

If you work in an office or can arrange to do so, you may return to work in a few days once you feel comfortable. If your work involves significant physical activity, you will need two to six weeks off work. If surgery is on your left knee you can drive as soon as you feel comfortable. On your right knee this may take a few weeks.

