

Post-Operative Instructions for ACL Reconstruction



**Bucks County
Orthopedic
Specialists**

www.BucksOrtho.com

When can I change my Dressing?

You may change your dressing 24 hours after surgery. You should remove all gauze, but leave any steri-strips in place. You should cover your incisions with light gauze or Band-Aids.

When can I take a Shower?

You may shower and get your incisions wet when your wounds are dry and there is no drainage, usually 2 days. We recommend a quick shower followed by patting the incisions dry. Do not take a bath with the wounds under water until the sutures have been removed.

How long should I use Crutches?

You should use crutches with light “foot-down” weight bearing for the first 2 weeks. By the third week, you may progress to full weight bearing without crutches.

How long will I need the Brace?

You will use your brace for three weeks after surgery. Initially the brace will be locked in a straight position, and it will be unlocked on your first post-op visit. You may remove your brace for range-of-motion exercises, dressing changes and showering.

What Exercises can I do to speed my recovery?

While you will go to Physical Therapy in one to two weeks, it is very helpful to begin range-of-motion exercises as soon as possible. Remove or unlock the brace and put your knee on a pillow and try to push the knee back to make the leg straight. Then place your hands behind your thigh and perform a heel slide, trying to bend your knee.

When can I Drive?

Driving after surgery can be dangerous, and an individual who operates a motor vehicle is responsible for their actions. Obviously, you should not drive while taking narcotic pain medication or if your leg is in a brace. You may drive when you can ensure the safety of yourself and the others on the road, even in an emergency.

When can I resume Full Activities, Exercise and Sports?

You will begin therapy exercise right after surgery, and you will gradually add strengthening and balance exercises. You will be able to ride a stationary bike within a few weeks after surgery, run 3-4 months after surgery and participate in strenuous lifting or contact sports 6-9 months after surgery.

If you have a concern or question after the procedure, please call our office at 215.348.7000.