

POST OP KNEE ARTHROSCOPY REHABILITATION

The surgery on your knee will have been performed through two or three small stab incisions (1cm) long. Usually there are no stitches and the wound has been closed with skin closure tapes called Steri-strips. On top of this is a thin layer of cotton wool padding and finally a firm crepe bandage; this is changed to a stocking bandage.

The knee will feel sore from the stab incisions and sometimes “squelchy” due to the remaining fluid inside the knee.

First Five Days

For the first five days, you should keep the knee dry when showering by using the waterproof dressing to cover the wounds.

Fifth Day

By the fifth day you may shower without any protection, if the wounds are dry.

If the Steri-strips begin to lift off they can be replaced with simple Band-Aids after gently drying the wounds.

Knee Exercises

From the first day after surgery, you should practice quadriceps straight leg raising exercises, that is, pushing the knee and leg straight and tensing the front thigh muscles for 10 seconds toes toward the ceiling and then another set with toes rotated out to the side. These exercises are done in sets of 10 at 3 times daily.

Each hour straighten and bend the knee from straight to bent at 90°, 10 times and then flex the ankle and foot up and down, again 10 times.

All these exercises are done when the knee is comfortable and should not cause any increase in pain.

From 10 days stationary bike, and pool walking 20 minutes 2nd daily.

Pain Relief

One of the advantages of arthroscopic surgery is that the incisions are small.

Postoperative pain is usually minor and simple analgesics such as Panadol, or Panadeine 2 tablets every six hours regularly even if there is only a little discomfort is better than waiting for the knee to become painful.

Please take the prescribed anti-inflammatory for 4 weeks.

If you have not been given tablets please make sure you are given a prescription before discharged home.

Icing the knee for 20-30 minutes every few hours is helpful for pain relief and reduces swelling. Don't burn the skin.

Walking, Exercise and Work

You should be able to walk taking most of your weight through the operated leg on the day or the day after your surgery. You may require a walking stick or occasionally crutches.

You should not engage in any vigorous activity or significant outdoors walking for 7 days after your surgery.

If employed in office type work, you may need about a week off work.

If you do manual work or are on your feet most of the day, you may require up to 2 weeks off work, occasionally longer, returning to light duties and working up to heavy labour over 6-8 weeks.

If you try to exercise or walk too soon you will have increasing pain and possibly swelling or bleeding within the knee, which may delay or hinder your overall recovery.

Some patients can drive a car at 2 days. However, to drive, the knee and your reflexes need to be normal (law and insurance requirements). You need to be able to brake and accelerate with force quickly. If you have a considerable limp then the leg is not "normal" and you should not drive.

If there is redness, increasing pain, bleeding or any form of discharge from the wounds (apart from some clear water for the first day or two), contact me immediately.

Follow-up Appointment

I would like to review you about two weeks after surgery. Please call my Assistant (02) 9409 0500 to confirm your appointment.

GREGGORY BURROW