

## **Patient Instructions Following Knee Arthroscopy**

1. Keep the bandages intact, clean and dry for three days following the surgery. When showering cover the bandages with saran wrap and a plastic bag. If the bandage feels tight, or if there is ankle swelling, please loosen the bandage, elevate the leg, and exercise by moving your foot up and down at the ankle joint.
2. In most cases there are no sutures to remove; the skin tapes, which hold the wound edges together, should be left in place until the follow up visit in my office. If the tapes loosen or fall off apply a Band-Aid or new steri strip in their place.
3. If you get some bleeding through the dressing apply direct pressure to the area for fifteen minutes, while the leg is elevated. You can then reapply the dressing, using sterile gauze and tensor from the pharmacy.
4. You will be given a prescription for the pain reliever (usually Tylenol #3 or Tramacet). Take one or two tablets every four hours, as needed. Take the medication regularly at the start, to get an appropriate blood level. As the pain settles, try to taper them off or, preferably, replace with Tylenol plain or Extra Strength Tylenol, i.e. if there is moderate pain take one plain Tylenol + one prescription tablet, if pain is mild, take two Tylenol. It is best if you take regular meds for the first day or two. It is important to check the medication you have been prescribed and inform me if it is a drug that you are sensitive, or allergic, to.
5. Do not be surprised if there is some swelling and discomfort around the joint for several days following surgery. Try to keep your leg elevated during this time. Intermittent application of ice for 20 minutes at a time, every few hours. The use of an ice compression device (Cryocuff, Polar Cub, etc.) can also help.
6. A sensation of “splashing” or fluid movement in the knee is normal and will gradually disappear.
7. You may walk on your leg, unless specifically instructed not to. Keep the knee moving (full straightening and bending as tolerated) so it does not get stiff. You may need to use crutches or a cane for a couple of days but **unless otherwise directed** it is safe to take full weight on the leg.
8. You can increase your activities as tolerated. If you overdo it the knee may swell, feel stiff and the level of pain may increase. We will discuss return to higher level activities, like sport, when you return to the office.
9. Arrange follow up by calling the office (604 526-7885). This appointment should be 5 to 10 days following surgery. We will review the findings at surgery and outline how to progress your activities and optimize your recovery.
10. Seek medical attention (preferably through my office or the Royal Columbian Hospital emergency, at 604 520-4383) if any of the following arise.
  - a. Persistently elevated temperature and/or fever or chills.
  - b. Persistent wound drainage
  - c. Increasing pain and/or numbness in the leg
  - d. Sudden increase in swelling of the calf or thigh
  - e. Chest pain or shortness of breath
11. These general instructions may be modified, based on individual circumstances.