

1 SCOTT A. HACKER, M.D.

ALVARADO ORTHOPAEDIC MEDICAL GROUP

619-286-9480 OFFICE

619-286-4568 FAX

WWW.ALVARADOORTHO.COM

POST OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

After your knee surgery

Follow Up Appointments

Schedule a follow-up appointment with Alice before leaving today.

Post-Operative Care of your Knee

Please follow these instructions carefully. If you have any questions, contact a member of Dr. Hacker's team at 619-286-9480.

Dressing Changes

Proper dressing changes are key to your success after surgery. You will be supplied with needed materials and instructions before leaving the hospital or surgery center.

- Change your dressing on post-operative day #1, then every other day. Once the wound is completely dry a dressing may be left in place to protect the wound.
- Apply band-aids or other clean dressing to the wounds as needed. The steri-strips will remain over the wounds for 2 weeks. We will replace them at your first follow-up appointment.
- Do **NOT** use ointments on your incisions. Keep the wounds dry.
- With each dressing change, evaluate the incision for excessive drainage, redness surrounding the incision, red streaks, and increased pain. These may be signs of infection. Phone us immediately with any questions or concerns.

Incisions

Most often, the sutures used during surgery will dissolve with time and are buried under the skin. These require no special care. Some incisions may have 'tags' of suture at either end. We will trim these when you return for your first visit.

Bathing

Keep incisions dry for the first 2 weeks after surgery. This can be done with a shower bag or other waterproof dressing. After showering, the gauze bandages do not need to be changed unless they become wet. Avoid baths, swimming pools or the ocean for at least 3 weeks and soaking in a hot tub until at least 4 weeks after surgery.

Your first set of goals: Control swelling and inflammation
Regain your full motion in the first 2 weeks after surgery

The following steps will help you reach these goals:

ELEVATION: Elevate your knee whenever possible. Try to keep it higher than your heart

ICE: Ice your knee 5-6 times a day, 20 minutes or more at a time. This can be done using a circulating ice cuff, ice packs or frozen peas. Ice is stronger than anti-inflammatory medication. Be diligent about icing! Be sure to ice down your knee for 20 minutes before and after therapy.

COMPRESSION: An ACE wrap or TED hose will help decrease swelling after surgery. These are to be worn for the first 2 weeks after surgery. Ted hose should be worn over the calf at all times. They serve the dual purpose of decreasing the chance of blood clot formation as well as aid in controlling swelling in the leg. You may remove them daily to wash, but should wear them as much as possible to get the maximum benefit. They can be worn for longer than 2 weeks if swelling persists. If a recirculating ice cuff is used, the TED hose should be under the pad.

PHYSICAL THERAPY: Physical therapy begins the day after surgery in most cases and is an essential component of your treatment. You will be given specific exercises to follow at different time frames during the rehabilitative process. Follow these carefully. If you have any questions, please call your physical therapist or our office at 619-286-9480. Be diligent about performing your exercises daily—even on days you don't meet with your therapist. Use your crutches as directed by Dr. Hacker, often for 1 week.

PRESCRIPTIONS: You may receive two or three prescriptions to use after surgery. All medicines are best taken with food if possible.

- *Naproxen.* An anti-inflammatory, to be taken twice a day with breakfast and dinner, for 2 weeks after surgery, or if you still have swelling in your knee. This may be different if you are already taking a anti-inflammatory.
- *Vicodin.* A narcotic medication, to be used only 'as needed' for pain in addition to the naproxen. Do not use with alcohol, drive while taking pain medication or take any additional Tylenol. Long term use can cause addiction.
- *Zofran.* A medication to minimize nausea sometimes experienced after a general anesthetic. To be used only 'as needed'
- These may be tailored to your specific needs.

We look forward to helping you get back to your peak potential!