

Discharge Instructions: Knee Arthroscopy

What to Expect

- Your knee may be swollen, warm, and stiff for several days after surgery. This is normal.
- Bruising and soreness around the incision and thigh are common and will improve gradually.
- Clicking or popping in the knee is also common early in the healing process.

Icing (Cryotherapy)

Cryotherapy reduces pain, improves sleep, and decreases the need for pain medication.

- Apply ice or a cold therapy unit to the knee for **20–30 minutes each hour**, especially during the first **48 hours** after surgery.
- Always **place a cloth or T-shirt between your skin and the ice source** to prevent frostbite.

Warning: Check your skin every 10 minutes while icing. Stop use if you experience:

- Burning, redness, or blisters
- Skin discoloration
- Numbness or increased pain

Swelling & Elevation

- **Elevate your leg above heart level** as much as possible during the first few days.
- Perform gentle ankle pumps and toe wiggles frequently to reduce the risk of blood clots.

Bathing / Showering

- **Keep your incisions dry for the first 5 days** after surgery.
- If your incisions are **dry and closed**, you may **shower on day 5**.
- Avoid direct water pressure on the knee.
- **Do not soak** in a tub, hot tub, or swim until cleared by your surgeon.

Dressing & Incision Care

- You will leave the hospital with a dressing and **TED hose** on your leg.
- You may **remove the dressing 72 hours** after surgery unless otherwise instructed.
- You may see **steri-strips (small tapes)** over your incisions—**do not remove them**.
- After removing the dressing:
 - Cover each incision with a **Band-Aid**
 - Reapply the **TED hose**
- Keep the incisions **clean and dry**
- If you prefer, you may **leave the surgical dressing in place** until your first follow-up visit.

TED Hose

- Helps reduce swelling in the leg, ankle, and foot.
- Wear it as much as possible until your follow-up appointment.
- You may remove it to **wash, sleep, or if it becomes uncomfortable**.

Bearing Weight

- After most arthroscopic procedures, **you may walk unassisted**, but some patients benefit from using **crutches, a cane, or walker** for additional support.
- You may gradually increase weight-bearing as **discomfort allows** unless instructed otherwise.

Driving

Do not drive if:

- You are taking **narcotic pain medication**
- You do not have full control of your operative leg

Most patients can resume driving within **1–2 weeks**, depending on which leg was operated on and how quickly strength and reflexes return.

Medications

- You may be prescribed a **narcotic pain medication**. Take only as directed and **only as needed**.
- Narcotics can cause **constipation**—drink water and eat a **high-fiber diet**.
- **Do not drive, drink alcohol, or operate machinery** while taking narcotic medications.
- You may transition to **acetaminophen or ibuprofen** as directed when your pain decreases.

Warning Signs – Contact Your Surgeon Immediately If:

- Fever **over 101.5°F**
- Chills
- Increased redness, warmth, or drainage at the incision
- Worsening or unrelieved pain
- Numbness or tingling in the leg
- Significant swelling of the entire leg or calf

Go to the Emergency Room If You Experience:

- **Chest pain**
- **Shortness of breath**

These may be signs of a **life-threatening blood clot or pulmonary embolism**.

Follow-Up Appointment

You should see **Dr. Grutter 14 days** after surgery.

If an appointment was not scheduled at discharge, **call the office when you get home** to arrange one.

Knee Arthroscopy Exercise Guide

Regaining mobility and strength is key to a successful recovery.

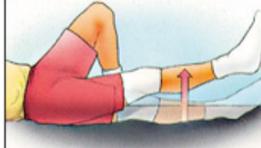
- Exercise for **20–30 minutes, 2–3 times daily**
- Focus on **both bending (flexion) and straightening (extension)** of the knee
- A formal **physical therapy program** may be prescribed depending on your progress

If your knee becomes painful or swollen after activity, follow **R.I.C.E.**:

- **Rest**
- **Ice**
- **Compress with an elastic wrap**
- **Elevate your leg**

If pain or swelling persists, reduce the intensity and **contact your surgeon** for further guidance.

Initial Exercise Program	
Hamstring Contraction: 10 Repetitions - No movement should occur in this exercise. Lie or sit with your knees bent to about 10 degrees. Pull your heel into the floor, tightening the muscles on the back of your thigh. Hold 5 seconds, then relax. Repeat 10 times.	
Quadriceps Contraction: 10 Repetitions - Lie on stomach with a towel roll under the ankle of your operated knee. Push ankle down into the towel roll. Your leg should straighten as much as possible. Hold for 5 seconds. Relax. Repeat 10 times.	
Straight Leg Raises: 10 Repetitions - Lie on your back, with uninvolved knee bent, straighten your involved knee. Slowly lift about 6 inches and hold for 5 seconds. Continue lifting in 6-inch increments, hold each time. Reverse the procedure, and return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times. Advanced: Before starting, add weights to your ankle, starting with 1 pound of weight and building up to a maximum of 5 pounds of weight over 4 weeks.	
Buttock Tucks: 10 Repetitions - While lying down on your back, tighten your buttock muscles. Hold tightly for seconds. Repeat 10 times.	
Straight Leg Raises, Standing, 10 Repetitions - Support yourself, if necessary, and slowly lift your leg forward keeping your knee straight. Return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times Advanced: Before starting, add weights to your ankle, starting with 1 pound of weight and building	

Intermediate Exercise Program	
Terminal Knee Extension, Supine, 10 Repetitions - Lie on your back with a towel roll under your knee. Straighten your knee (still supported by the roll) and hold 5 seconds. Slowly return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times. Advanced: Before starting, add weights to your ankle, starting with 1 pound of weight and building up to a maximum of 5 pounds of weight over 4 weeks.	
Straight Leg Raises, 5 Sets, 10 Repetitions - Lie on your back, with your uninvolved knee bent. Straighten your other knee with a quadriceps muscle contraction. Now, slowly raise your leg until your foot is about 12 inches from the floor. Slowly lower it to the floor and relax. Perform 5 sets of 10 repetitions. Advanced: Before starting, add weights to your ankle, starting with 1 pound of weight and building up to a maximum of 5 pounds of weight over 4 weeks.	

Intermediate Exercise Program	
<p>Partial Squat, with Chair, 10 Repetitions - Hold onto a sturdy chair or counter with your feet 6-12 inches from the chair or counter. Do not bend all the way down. DO NOT go any lower than 90 degrees. Keep back straight. Hold for 5-10 seconds. Slowly come back up. Relax. Repeat 10 times.</p>	
<p>Quadricep Stretch - Standing, 10 Repetitions - Standing with the involved knee bent, gently pull heel toward buttocks, feeling a stretch in the front of the leg. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times.</p>	