

ADVANCED

Center for Orthopedics
and Plastic Surgery

Discharge Instructions – Multi-ligament Reconstruction Dr. Garrett Kerns, DO

Anesthesia: General Spinal Sedation Local Block _____

- You have received anesthesia; rest and relax the day of surgery. Please be aware of possible dizziness and exercise caution when you are up. **A responsible adult must be with the patient for 24 hours following surgery for safety and falls prevention.**
- Begin with liquids, and advance diet as tolerated; avoid greasy and spicy foods.
- No important decisions or signing of legal documents for 24 hours. Do not operate power machinery.
- Do not drive for 24 hours following surgery or while taking narcotic pain medications.
- No alcoholic beverages for 24 hours, or while taking narcotics.
- If you are unable to urinate, feel uncomfortable, and it has been 8-10 hours since you last urinated, go to an urgent care or the ER.
- If you had a block, be sure to start your oral pain medication before it begins to wear off.

Nerve Block:

- If you have had a nerve block, be sure to start taking your pain medication *before* the block begins to wear off. **It is recommended to take a pain pill before bed if the block has not already begun to wear off.**
- Typically, a nerve block will last between 8-24 hours from the time of injection. Notify your surgeon if the nerve block lasts more than 48 hours.
- Do not use your operative extremity until the nerve block has worn off. Then, follow your surgeon's activity restrictions.

Activity:

- Keep your leg elevated with a pillow under your calf or ankle, not under the knee.
- Keep your operative extremity at or above the level of your heart for the first 2-3 days. This is the best position to reduce swelling.
- For a few days after surgery, you are to be **partial weight bearing until you feel comfortable to fully weight bear.** You will use crutches/walker after surgery until your therapist feels you are ready to discontinue wearing them, which could be greater than 6 weeks.
- You must use crutches and wear your hinged knee brace when walking and while sleeping.
- It is ok to unlock the brace while sitting.

Brace:

- Wear the immobilizer locked in extension at all times (even when sleeping),** except for showering and physical therapy exercises.
- It to be locked in extension for walking and sleeping, it is ok to unlock the brace while sitting per the instructions you were provided otherwise follow these instructions:
 - Weeks 1 and 2: Locked in extension while walking and sleeping; sitting range of motion to 90 degrees
 - Weeks 3 and 4: 0-30 degrees while walking and sleeping; sitting range of motion to 110 degrees
 - Weeks 5 and 6: 0-50 degrees while walking and sleeping; sitting range of motion

to 110 degrees

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- It is likely that the brace will not fit as well after the surgical dressing is removed. If so, feel free to adjust the straps accordingly. If you have trouble with this, feel free to ask your physical therapist for assistance or contact our office at 906-225-1321 for help.

Physical Therapy:

- **Make an appointment within 3-5 days of surgery.**
- A therapy protocol will be provided in your packet.

Dressing:

- Keep your dressing dry and intact as instructed.
- Your knee has an abundant amount of gauze/dressing on it. Do not be alarmed if range of motion feels limited secondary to this while the surgical dressing is still on.
- You may remove dressing in 3 days. You may remove the ace bandage and gauze. Please leave steri-strips in place until your two-week post op appointment, or until they fall off on their own.
- Wait to shower until initial surgical dressing is removed. Once it is removed, please cover your incisions with plastic wrap while showering to avoid incisions getting wet. Pat area dry with a clean towel after showers.
- Do not submerge your knee in water (bathtub, hot tub, pool, etc.) until your incisions healing has been cleared by your surgeon's office for these activities which will be at least 4 weeks.

Ice:

- If polar is given, have on continuously for first 48 hours; otherwise use ice packs 8 times a day for 20 minutes on.
- For 6 weeks after first 48 hours: at least 4-6 times/day for 20 minutes. Do not exceed 20-minute increments. Leave at least 30 minutes in between icing sessions to avoid frost bite.

Pain/Medications:

- Expect to have pain following surgery. Pain level of 4-5/10 is our goal. The pain medication prescribed for you should provide relief, but often does not take all the pain away. The first few days following surgery can be the most painful. Just remember, it will get better.
- It is important to keep your pain under control. It is difficult to catch up with your pain if it becomes severe.
- **Pain Management Program (PLEASE FOLLOW EXACTLY FOR BEST RESULTS)**
 - **Over-the-counter Acetaminophen (Tylenol): 1000 mg every 8 hours for 5 days**
 - **Ibuprofen 800 mg every 8 hours for 5 days**
 - **Oxycodone 5mg every 4-6 hours as needed for pain**
 - **Works best if you alternate between Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen every 4 hours making sure not to exceed 3 doses of Acetaminophen in a 24-hour period.**
 - **After 5 days everything can be taken as needed.**
 - **IF you have an allergy then take what you can.**
- Resume your preoperative medications per your physician. Refer to your medication list given to you at discharge.

DVT Prevention:

- Blood clots are at a higher risk of developing in the leg after having orthopedic surgery and when your activity is limited following any surgical procedure.
- We can reduce the risk of this rare complication from surgery giving you Xarelto for two weeks after surgery if you have a history of DVT. Otherwise, you will start 325mg Aspirin twice daily after for 2 weeks.
- This medication is NOT for pain control, but specifically for prevention against developing blood clots after surgery and must be taken as scheduled.
- You should start taking Ibuprofen once you have finished your anticoagulation regiment (Xarelto), unless you are allergic or have been told that you cannot take non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications.

Supplements to take to assist with healing:

1. Vitamin D: 5,000 IUs for 12 weeks after surgery
2. Vitamin C: 3,000-5,000 mg for 12 after surgery
3. Juven HMB: Twice daily for 12 weeks after surgery

Office Return:

- Please call the office (906-225-1321) on the first day or two after surgery to schedule a two week post-operative visit if it has not already been arranged. Most likely, it has already been arranged.

Report to Surgeon any of the following:

- Fever over 101 degrees for more than 24 hours
- Foul drainage, redness, or warmth at the operative site
- Large amount of bleeding or drainage
- Severe and uncontrolled pain
- Persistent nausea or vomiting
- Hives, rash or intolerance (Stop medications)

Who to Contact

Contact information for Dr. Kerns:

- **906-225-1321**

**Call 911 or go to the nearest ER if you experience shortness of breath, redness, warmth, and extreme pain in the calf. These are signs of a blood clot.

If you have questions or concerns please contact your physician or our 24-hour answering service at 906-225-1321.

Other Instructions:
