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KNEE ARTHROSCOPY

Physiotherapy following arthroscopic surgery of the knee helps hasten your recovery. The aims are to achieve full range of movement, minimize loss of muscle strength, and prevent unnecessary complications such as persistent swelling and blood clots.

MOBILITY

Keep walking to a minimum for the first week. The main priority is to give the inflammation caused by the surgery an opportunity to settle. Ideally you should only be walking to the bathroom during the first 72 hours.

You can usually become more active during the second week once swelling and pain have reduced.

Your surgeon or physiotherapist may recommend the use of crutches to reduce strain on the knee. If you do not take crutches from the hospital, but later find walking painful, you can organize some crutches through a local pharmacy.

When walking with crutches, unless specified by your physiotherapist, you can take as much weight on your operated leg as is comfortable (unless instructed otherwise).

If comfortable you can use a single crutch held on the opposite side to the leg you are trying to protect.

You can stop using crutches when you have no pain, can walk without a limp, and are feeling confident; for most people this is usually after 3-4 days.

When going up stairs- good leg first, then operated leg, then crutches (if used);
When going down stairs- crutches first (if used), then operated leg, then good leg

GENERAL ADVICE

Apply an ice pack to your knee for 20 minutes, 4-5 times a day (after the exercises and any longer walks) for the first week post-operatively.

Keep your leg elevated wherever possible for the first week, and try to rest with your knee completely straight at some stage through the day.

During the first week avoid repetitive lower limb activities (eg. long walks, bike riding) and immersing the knee in water for a couple of weeks to reduce the risk of infection.

EXERCISES

The following exercises help to maintain circulation, strength and flexibility whilst you are recovering from the operation. Try to perform them **4 times a day**, starting on the day of your operation. **Ankle pumps:**

Move your feet up and down from the ankles for 30 seconds.



Quads exercises:

a) Quads tightening: Push the back of your knee down toward the bed, locking your knee fully straight, by tightening your thigh muscles (quads). Hold for 3 seconds. Repeat 10 times.



b) Straight leg raise: Lock your knee straight, then slowly lift your leg up about 20 cm. Lower slowly. Repeat 10 times.



c) Knee straightening over roll: Place a rolled up towel under your knee. Straighten your knee as far as possible by tightening your thigh (quads) muscle. Lower slowly. Repeat 10 times.



Knee bending:

a) Lying: Gently bend your knee, sliding your foot toward your bottom. Use your hands to assist if necessary. Repeat 10 times.



b) Sitting: Gently bend your operated knee as far as is comfortable over the edge of a bed or couch. You can support your operated leg with your unoperated leg if necessary. Repeat 5 times.



If any of these exercises cause significant pain, please contact your physiotherapist or surgeon.

FURTHER PHYSIOTHERAPY

The advice contained in this handout is appropriate for the first week after your operation, however the average recovery from knee arthroscopy takes 3-4 weeks.

Further physiotherapy to reduce swelling, regain range of motion and strength, and prepare for return to work or sport, is often required.

Glenferrie Sports and Spinal Clinic is located within Glenferrie Private Hospital and specializes in orthopaedic surgery rehabilitation. We work closely with the surgeons who performed your operation.

It is usually possible to arrange a physiotherapy review to follow immediately after your review with your surgeon. Call our office on 9815 2555 if you would like to book an appointment.

Uninsured patients:

Your surgeon has requested that you receive a physiotherapy consultation prior to your discharge to ensure your recovery is as prompt as possible. There will be a consultation fee charged.