**Home Instructions:**

**Cartilage Restoration**

Name:

Date of Surgery:

Follow-up Appointment:

1. **Dressings**: Your knee is covered with a gauze dressing that is wrapped in an ACE wrap. Keep the dressing clean and dry. Leave the dressing on for 2 days after surgery. On the 2nd day after surgery, you may remove the dressing. If the incisions are dry, you may leave them open to air. Do not remove the stitches. If the incisions are still draining, place a new dressing on. If the dressing becomes soaked, call Dr. Houdek’s office to assist in changing it.

2. **Brace**: You have a brace holding your knee straight. The brace is not to be removed until the dressing is changed. After showering, put the brace back on. The Velcro straps may be readjusted for comfort, but the knee is meant to remain straight.

3. **Shower/Bathing**: When the incisions are dry, you may shower and allow water to run over the incisions, and then pat them dry. No showers until the incisions have stopped draining. You must do sponge baths until the incisions are dry. No baths, pools, hot-tubs, or soaks until 4 weeks after surgery.

4. **Ice**: Ice the knee 4-5 times per day for only 20 minutes per session. Continue for 1 week after surgery.

Cryocuff: If you have the Cryocuff, leave it on as often as possible as it is circulating cold water around your knee. The ice needs to be changed about every 6 hours.

5. **Meals**: The first meal after surgery should be light and liquid as nausea may occur with a full stomach in the first 10-12 hours.

6. **Activity**: When at rest, the leg and brace should be elevated at or above the level of your heart, such as on pillows while lying on the couch or a bed. You will be non-weight bearing on the leg.

7. **Crutches/Walker**: Walk with both crutches. Again, you should not bear weight through the leg.

8. **Medications**:

Aspirin: 325mg tablet once daily for two weeks to prevent blood clots

Colace: 100mg tablet twice daily as needed for constipation. The pain medication and surgery can slow down our digestive system.

Zofran: 4mg tablet under the tongue every 8 hours as needed for nausea.

Pain Medication: Will be Norco or Percocet. Take 1-2 tablets every 6 hours as needed for pain. If you have no pain, do not take these pills.

Anti-inflammatory Medications: Examples include Aleve, Ibuprofen, etc…These may be taken as directed for additional pain relief. Do not take more than 800mg every 8 hours.

Antibiotic: Take as directed for 5 days after surgery.

9. **Exercises**: During the first week after surgery, the following exercises should be done daily.

Ankle pumps: Raise the toes and ankle toward the head and then point the toes and ankle away from the body. Hold each position for 5 seconds and squeeze hard. This helps prevent muscle atrophy and blood clots. Do this exercise for a minimum of 10 sets, 3 times per day for the first week.

Straight Leg Raises: While lying on your back, tighten the quadriceps muscles (thigh) to completely straighten the leg. While squeezing hard lift the straight leg off the floor or bed by 12 inches. Perform as many as 30 repetitions 3 times per day for the first week. This exercise helps prevent quadriceps atrophy and allows a quicker return to normal walking.

Range of Motion: It is **essential** in the first few weeks to make sure that your leg can get all the way straight. Multiple times a day while lying down, put a pillow under your heal and push the back of your knee to the floor. Flex your thigh to force the leg straight. Hold for 5-10 seconds, and release. 10 sets at least 2-3 times per day.

10. **Smoking/Nicotine**: If you happen to use any nicotine product, including e-cigarettes and chewing tobacco, try to refrain while your incision heals. The nicotine causes a constriction in your blood vessels and is one of the main reasons for poor healing.

11. **Precautions**: Excessive nausea, inability to take fluid or food, inability to urinate, fevers and chills, numbness lasting more than the initial 24 hours, or increasing pain after the first two days are reasons to call Dr. Houdek’s office at 828-324-2800.