

Home Instructions: Knee Arthroplasty

Name:

Date of Surgery:

Follow-up Appointment:

- 1. Dressings:** Leave the stitches in place. Your dressing will be changed in the hospital. Leave Aquacel dressing in place until 1st office visit post-operatively. If the dressing becomes soaked, call Dr. Sladicka's office to assist in changing it.
- 2. Shower/Bathing:** You may shower if your Aquacel dressing is sealed at the edges. If not sealed, you must do sponge baths. No baths, pools, hot-tubs, or soaks until 4 weeks after surgery.
- 3. Ice:** Ice the knee 4-5 times per day for only 20 minutes per session. Continue for 1 week after surgery.
- 4. Activity:** You may bear your full weight on the leg as tolerated. During the first week after the surgery, elevate the operated limb on pillows while lying down or sitting down. The knee should be elevated high enough to be level with the heart.
- 5. Walker/Cane:** Walk with a walker initially. Most people use a walker for 2-4 weeks, then a cane for 2-4 weeks, and then nothing. When you are comfortable enough you may go without any assistive device.
- 6. Medications:**
 - Pain Medication: Will be Norco or Percocet. Take 1-2 tablets every 4-6 hours as needed for pain. If you have no pain, do not take these pills.
 - Anti-Coagulation Medications: Take as directed. Do not take NSAIDs such as Aleve, Ibuprofen(Advil), or Aspirin unless otherwise directed.
- 7. 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 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 heel 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.

8. 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 and infection.

9. 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. Sladicka's office at 828-324-2800.