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POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR KNEE SURGERY

A. Day of Surgery:

Diet: Begin with liquids and light foods (Jello, soup, etc) Progress to your normal diet if you are not nauseated.

Medication: Hydrocodone _____ Ketorolac _____ Other(s) _____

Aspirin (325mg standard strength - not baby Aspirin) 1 tablet a day for next 2 weeks to decrease the risk of blood clots.

Strong pain medication has been prescribed. Use as directed. Do not combine with alcohol. Be careful as you walk or climb stairs. It is normal to have pain and swelling in your knee after surgery.

Ice: Keep an ice pack on your knee for 30 minutes at a time (or use Polar Care machine if given) at least 4-5 times per day. Icing will assist with pain and swelling control.

Bandage: Leave bandage on the knee. Keep dry. The bandage may be slightly bloody or wet from the incision. This is normal.

Activity: Keep leg elevated on a pillow placed under ankle. **Do not keep a pillow under your knee!!!**

Showering: No showering

Crutches: No Weight / Partial Weight / Full Weight on operative leg with crutches is OK.

Knee Brace: All the time / When Ambulating / Not needed

Exercises: Begin ankle pumps, quadriceps sets and straight leg raises.

B. First and Second Post-Operative Day:

Medication: Continue to take pain medication as needed every 4-6 hours.

Ice: Continue to ice your knee 30 minutes at a time 4-5 times per day.

Bandage: Leave bandage on the knee and keep it dry. The bandage may be slightly bloody or wet from the incision. This is normal.

Activity: Keep leg elevated on a pillow placed under ankle, as on the previous day, when in bed.

Showering: No showering until day 5, or day _____

Exercises: Above noted exercises to be performed 2-3 times daily (with brace on and locked if a brace is given after surgery). Goal is 25 reps 3 times per day:

C. Third Post-Operative Day Until Return Visit:

Medication: Continue to take pain medication as needed every 4-6 hours.

Ice: Continue as on post-op days 1 and 2.

Bandage: You may remove surgical bandage on the post-operative day #5. Leave steri-strips (paper tapes) in position. DO NOT put any ointments or bacitracin on incisions. You may shower on post-operative day #5 (or day ____) only if the wounds are dry. Place a plastic bag or saran wrap over incisions for showering until sutures are removed. Use a shower chair. If wounds do get wet, gently pat the area dry. DO NOT soak your knee in water or go swimming in a pool or a jacuzzi.

Activity: Keep leg elevated on a pillow placed under ankle, as on previous day, when in bed.

Exercises: Continue exercises as noted above in addition to those given from physical therapy. If a brace is given, remove brace ONLY when showering, icing, and doing exercises. Otherwise, keep brace on (including while sleeping).

Appointment: You should make a follow-up appointment for approx 14 days from surgery. Please call the office the following business day after surgery if you do not have an appointment already scheduled.

Physical Therapy: To begin in 2 to 3 days please call to schedule the appointment if you do not have one already set up. Physical therapy prescription is given to you on your last visit or with your discharge documents.

Driving: No driving until you are completely off the pain medications, at full weight bearing and not using crutches. This will be assessed on one of your future clinic visits after surgery.

Knee Response to Surgery: Your knee and lower leg/ankle will be swollen. It may take 4 weeks or longer for the swelling to go away. It is also common to notice bruising around the thigh and calf as the swelling resolves. If excessive bleeding from incision occurs, please notify our office. Elevate the leg above your heart to minimize swelling for next 14 days.

Concerns or questions:

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Meghan (clinical nurse – Dr. Kaar) at (314) 977-1082 / email: meghan.gehrs@health.slu.edu

Julia (clinical nurse specialist – Dr. Kim) at (314) 577-8524 / email: julia.santiago@health.slu.edu

General office at (314) 256-3850 (SLUH South Campus Clinic); (314) 977-1050 (St Mary’s Clinic);

Cardinal Glennon (314) 577-5640

Signature of Physician

Signature of RN

Signature of Patient
