

Home Care Instructions following ACL Reconstruction Surgery

This protocol is intended to be a general outline only. The physician reserves the right to either advance or delay this protocol as deemed necessary. If so, this should be done by direct communication with the therapist, or in writing on the therapy referral form given to the patient on the day of surgery.

1. Starting when you get home from surgery, ice and elevate the leg using the GameReady™ or PolarCare™ device supplied by the hospital. The hip should be at approximately a 45° angle, and the knee should be maintained in a straight position, using pillows under your lower leg for support.
2. Starting the day of surgery, remove the knee immobilizer to perform exercises as instructed by your therapist. If your leg is wrapped in thick cotton dressings, leave these in place until you start physical therapy.
3. While relaxing, keep your knee in a straight position with a small towel roll under your heel. Do not relax or sleep with the knee in a flexed position (such as propped over a pillow).
4. Do not place any weight through your involved leg after surgery. You will need to use the crutches to ambulate in a non-weight-bearing fashion until you see the physical therapist the day after your surgery.
5. Your dressing will be changed at physical therapy on the day after surgery, and your physical therapist will advise you on wound care thereafter. You will also be fit for a TROM knee brace, if it has not been done already.
6. You should schedule your regular outpatient physical therapy well in advance. Therapy will begin the day after surgery. You will attend physical therapy 3 times/week for the first 2 to 4 weeks, then 1-2 times/week thereafter until discharge, depending on your level of function and capabilities.