

ACL FAQ'S

(Frequently Asked Questions) about ACL Reconstruction

Can I take a shower? You may shower, and the leg may get wet. **DO NOT REMOVE THE BUTTERFLY TAPES UNTIL 14 DAYS AFTER SURGERY.** Remove the brace and the wraps, and either sit on a chair or steady yourself with handrails. No immersion in water is allowed for 14 days post-op. This means - No soaking the leg in a bathtub, hot tub, whirlpool, or swimming in the ocean / pool.

Can I drive? If surgery was performed on your left leg and you drive an automatic transmission car, you may drive within 2-3 days of surgery, as long as you are not taking the narcotic pain medication. If you had surgery on the right leg, or drive a manual transmission, you may drive once you have adequate strength in the leg. This usually occurs between 10 and 14 days post-op. We recommend that you test your driving ability in an empty parking lot with supervision until you determine whether or not you can drive safely.

When do I start therapy? You must begin therapy as soon as possible (unless instructed otherwise). This means that you must call for an appointment immediately after your first postoperative visit. You **DO NOT** need to wait until the stitches are removed. Therapy can be done anywhere that is convenient and paid for by your insurance.

Do I have to be in the CPM machine for 6 hours? You **ARE NOT** required to be in this machine 6 hours per day. Our rule is that if you are going to lay around and do nothing... Lay around and do nothing in the machine. If you would rather be up and around, we would rather you be up and around also. The machine does nothing for your strength, it only aids motion. It is important, so don't neglect it completely.

How long do I keep the CPM machine? You keep the machine until you can do 90 degrees comfortably and are enrolled in formal rehabilitation. This is usually achieved by 10 days from surgery. You need to call the company for a pick-up. This is not automatic.



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Do I need this cold machine? The main benefit of the cold machine is that it does not get as cold as ice, therefore you can leave it on all the time if you want to. If you would prefer to use a regular ice bag, that is also acceptable. If you use ice, you must limit its use to 20 minutes at a time with an hour between applications.

Do I need crutches? UNLESS INSTRUCTED OTHERWISE - we encourage full weight bearing immediately post-op. This means you may put full weight on the leg (with the brace locked straight). YOU DO NOT NEED CRUTCHES. We prefer that you put weight on the leg to maintain strength and to encourage healing to occur

When do I get my stitches out? Your stitches will be removed between 7 and 14 days after surgery.

Do I need pain medication? Most patients use the Percocet for the first few days after surgery. Most patients change over to Tylenol or Advil during the first 7-10 days. Some patients require pain medication for longer periods of time.

How long do I need this brace? The brace is used to give support so that you don't need crutches. Initially, you lack the strength to stand and the brace enables you to stand and walk. Most people use their brace for about 4 weeks. The brace is adjustable and is usually shortened at your second post-op visit, if appropriate for your situation. Most people gradually wean themselves off the brace. You begin by not wearing it around the home in a controlled setting and gradually lessen its use.

What should I worry about? The most serious complication that can occur after arthroscopy is a blood clot in the calf. This is easily prevented if you avoid lying in bed for days after surgery and instead walk around a little. Some muscle soreness in the calf is normal because you are walking in an unusual way following surgery. You'll know you may have a clot if you have swelling in your whole leg, redness and exquisite tenderness in the calf. This complication is rare, but should be taken seriously. Increasing pain or numbness are concerning as well, these can be signs of increasing swelling or a compartment syndrome, this is an emergency and the office should be called immediately. As always - if you are concerned call the office.

When will by appointments be? Routine post-op appointments occur at 1 week after surgery, 2 weeks after surgery, 6 weeks after surgery, 3-4 months after surgery, 6 months and 1 year.

Can I get a note for work or school? Notes for missing work or school are available upon request.

Kneecap Movement

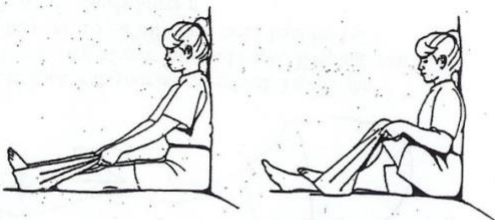


Using both hands, move your kneecap up and down 30 times and back and forth 30 times.

Repeat 1 time. Do 2-3 sessions per day.

Only perform these exercises as instructed by our office. If there are any questions concerning your exercises please contact us.

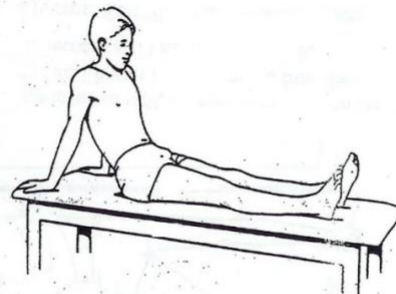
Knee Range of Motion



Using your hands or a towel around your heel, gently bend your knee upwards until a stretch is felt. Hold for 10 seconds then straighten the knee for 10 seconds.

Repeat 10 times per set. Do 1 sets per session.
Do 2-3 sessions per day.

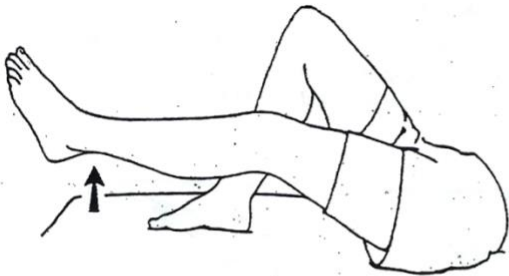
Quadriceps Sets



Squeeze your buttocks together and tighten the muscles on the top of your thighs by pushing your knees down into the surface. Hold 10 seconds.

Repeat 10 times. Do 2-3 sessions per day.

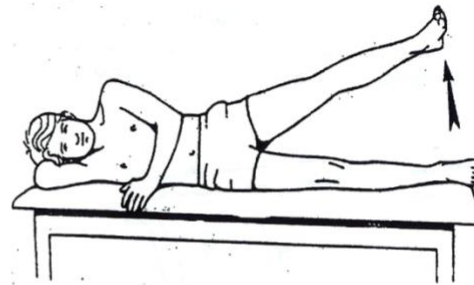
Straight Leg Raise



Lie on your back with your other leg bent. Tighten the muscles in the front of your involved thigh. Keeping your leg straight, raise it 6 - 8" off of the table, hold for 1-2 seconds and then slowly lower it.

Do 3 sets of 10 reps. Rest 30 seconds in between sets. Do 2 sessions per day.

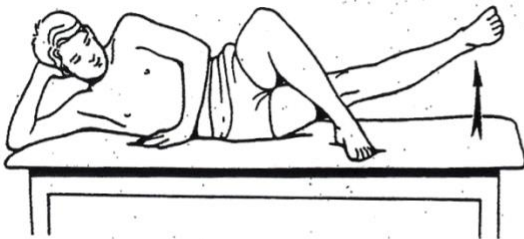
Side-Lying Hip Abduction



Lying on your non-involved side, tighten the muscles on the front of the thigh, then lift your leg 8-10 inches from the surface. Hold 1-2 seconds and then slowly lower it.

Repeat 3 sets of 10 reps. Rest 30 seconds in between sets. Do 2 sessions per day.

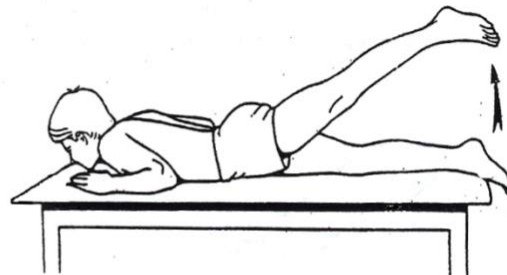
Side-Lying Hip Adduction



Lying on your involved side, tighten the muscles on the front of the thigh, then lift your leg 2-4 inches from the surface. Hold 1-2 seconds then slowly lower it.

Repeat 3 sets of 10 reps. Rest 30 seconds in between sets. Do 2 sessions per day.

Prone Hip Extension



Lying on your stomach, tighten the muscles on the front of the thigh, then lift your leg 8-10 inches from the surface, keeping the knee straight. Hold 1-2 seconds and then slowly lower it.

Repeat 3 sets of 10 reps. Rest 30 seconds in between sets. Do 2 sessions per day.