

Geoffrey H. Westrich, M.D.
Hospital for Special Surgery
535 East 70th Street Rm. 324
New York, N.Y. 10021

Patient and Family Education

Discharge Instructions: Knee Arthroscopy & Menisectomy

Diet

You can resume your regular diet as tolerated.

Medications

Take your usual medications **UNLESS** you are directed differently by your doctor.

Pain Management:

- Pain medication such as Vicodin® is often ordered. You may be directed to take anti-inflammatory medication such as Naprosyn®, Vioxx®, or Celebrex®.
- Pain medication should be taken 20-30 minutes before doing any exercises. Do not take alcoholic beverages, drive a car, or operate heavy machinery when taking pain medication.
- **Apply an ice pack to the covered incision for 20-30 minutes at least 4 times a day, or as instructed by your doctor.**
- Call your doctor if your pain is not well controlled.

Activity

- You may bear weight as tolerated with crutches.
- You can stop using crutches when you are comfortable, usually after 3 days.
- Keep your leg raised when you are sleeping or sitting. Place one or two pillows under the calf or ankle. **Do not put the pillow under the knee.**
- Do exercises and crutch walking as directed by the physical therapist.

Repeat the following exercises 10 times each leg.

- **Ankle pumps:** Move foot up and down.
 - **Heel slides:** Lie on your back. Slowly bend your knee as you slide your knee towards your bottom.
 - **Quad sets:** Lie on back. Press knee into bed by tightening the muscle on front of the thigh. Hold tightened muscle for 3 counts.
 - **Straight leg raising:** Lie on your back with one knee bent. Lift opposite leg 6-12 inches from the bed, keeping the knee straight. Hold for 3 counts.
 - **Sit on the side of the bed or chair with feet flat on the floor.** Lift one foot off the floor to straighten the knee. Hold for 3 counts.
 - **You can use an exercise bike at home**, without resistance, for short periods (5 -10 mins). Make sure the bicycle seat is in a higher than usual position.
- You will do full range of motion exercises after the stitches are taken out (10-14 days after the procedure).

Bandage or Dressing

Keep the dressing clean and dry for the first three days. After three days, remove the dressing. Place a band-aid over each stitch. Change the band-aids daily until the stitches are taken out.

Showering

If you can stand for 10-15 minutes, you can usually shower. **But you MUST keep the dressing dry by covering it with a plastic bag for the first three days.**

Call your doctor if you have any of the following:

- Fever of 100.5 or higher that continues after 48 hours.
- Any bleeding or drainage that continues after 48 hours.
- Reddened or painful leg or calf.
- Feeling of numbness or tingling sensation, and change in the temperature or color of your leg, foot, or toes that does not go away.
- Blurry vision, double vision, or dizziness.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Persistent headache.
- Dressing becomes wet.
- Increased unrelieved pain.
- If you had spinal or epidural anesthesia and the anesthesia injection site is inflamed (red, swollen, or oozes blood or fluid), call your doctor.



**If you cannot reach your doctor and these symptoms continue,
go to the nearest hospital emergency room.**

Follow up visit

Call your doctor's office to make your follow up visit. This visit should take place 10-14 days after surgery. At your first follow up visit your stitches will be removed. Your doctor may recommend physical therapy to help restore strength and movement in your limb.

This resource provides brief, general information about this health care topic. It does not take the place of specific instructions you receive from your health care providers. For answers to other questions consult your physician or other health care provider.