

Total Knee Arthroplasty - Discharge Instructions

DIET

- Begin with clear liquids and light food (Jello , soup etc)
- Progress to normal diet as tolerated

WOUND CARE

- Your wound is dressed with a water-tight dressing which should remain in place for 1 week
- After 1 week you can remove the bandage and apply dry gauze as needed
- It is normal for the knee to swell and bruise after surgery.
- It is ok to shower after 48 hrs Do not use any soaps or lotions around surgical site
- Avoid submerging wound under water for 1 month (No hot tubs or baths)
- To avoid infection, keep surgical incision clean and dry

MEDICATIONS

- Pain medications are injected into your surgical site and will provide relief between 12-36 hrs
- Narcotic pain medication (hydrocodone or oxycodone) This is meant for use the first week.
- Side effects of narcotics include nausea, drowsiness and constipation. Take with food , use miralax stool softener and stay well hydrated . Do not drive while taking Narcotic medication
- Gabapentin - This is a medication to help with nerve pain
- Meloxicam / Celebrex – anti-inflammatory medication
- Tramadol - this a less powerful pain medication
- Miralax – this is an excellent stool softener
- Tylenol (Acetaminophen) 500mg
- Blood thinner (Aspirin or other medication) - this should be used for the first 6 weeks

ACTIVITY

- Elevate your operative extremity as much as possible (above your heart)
- Do not place any pillows under the knee (we want your knee straight)
- Place pillow or towel roll under your ankle (this helps straighten the knee)
- Use a Walker or Crutches. You should bear as much weight as you can tolerate
- Avoid long periods of sitting. Get up and move frequently
- Begin outpatient physical therapy within 48 hrs of discharge (2-3 X / week)
- Start a home exercise program. (ankle pumps, straight leg raises)
- NO driving for the first 6 weeks

ICE THERAPY

- Begin immediately after surgery
- You can use an ice water machine or ice bags. Do not place these devices directly on skin

EMERGENCIES

- Please contact our office if you are concerned about any of the following:
- Fever above 101.5 (it is normal to have mildly elevated temperature for a few days)
- Painful swelling (mild swelling is normal)
- Difficulty breathing
- Drainage on the dressing (more than the size of a 1/2 dollar coin)

FOLLOW UP

- You should have a post-operative appointment 2 weeks following your surgery
- If you need to be seen sooner or have questions, please call 630 859-8700