

## **Jennifer L. Cook, MD**

Florida Joint Replacement and Sports Medicine Center  
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### **Post-Operative Instructions for Anterior Cruciate Ligament Reconstruction**

**1. Wound Care** – You have a sterile dressing on your knee. Keep it dry. You may remove this dressing 72 hours after surgery. Your incision is being held together by white plastic strips (Steri Strips). DO NOT remove these strips; they will fall off on their own over time. You may take a shower, however be sure to cover the Steri Strips with saran wrap so they do not get wet. Do not soak in a tub or go swimming.

**2. CPM & Physical Therapy** - Begin the CPM at 0 to 60 degrees and 3 rpms for a minimum of 4-6 hours daily. You may break up the hours as your schedule allows, you may sleep in the CPM if desired. Increase the ROM by 5 to 10 degrees every other day.

We would like you to see a Physical Therapist within 48 hours of your arrival home. The Therapist should follow the ACL protocol given to you. If you have not already arranged for physical therapy, call the office at for a list of therapists near your home or work.

**3. Brace and Crutches** - Upon discharge from the hospital, you will be fitted with a brace and crutches. Be sure to use them when ambulating. You DO NOT have to sleep in the brace. You may stop using the crutches when you and your therapist feel you are safe without them (usually 2 weeks). Continue to wear the brace until Dr. Cook says you may walk without it (usually 4-6 weeks).

**4. Cold Therapy** - Keep your operated leg elevated with some pillows under your ankle. Ice the knee as much as possible at 20 minute intervals. It's important to remember to always ice your knee after exercise.

**5. Follow-up** - You should already have an appointment for suture removal.

#### **6. Possible Reactions**

*a. Fever*- a temperature of up to 101 degrees Fahrenheit is expected for the first two weeks following surgery. If this should occur, take Tylenol every four hours as needed. Call the office for fevers in excess of 102 or that do not respond to Tylenol.

*b. Drainage-* a small amount of clear or blood-tinged drainage is expected for the first 72 hours. If you have excessive drainage following this period, or any thick or foul smelling drainage from the wound, call the office.

*c. Wound-* if your wound should open, notify the office immediately

*d. Swelling-* you may experience swelling for many weeks and even months after the surgery. This is normal. During the first two weeks post-op, the swelling from the knee may gradually travel down to the calf and ankle. This is to be expected, as an effect of gravity.

If you have any further questions please call the office.

Physician Name Jennifer L. Cook, MD      Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the instructions indicated above. I understand that I must follow-up with Dr. Cook as instructed by her.

Patient Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_  
Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_