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[www.tigerortho.com](http://www.tigerortho.com)

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED POST-OPERATIVE QUESTIONS (FAQ's) FOR ARTHROSCOPIC OR OPEN KNEE SURGERY**

### **KNEE BRACE**

Your leg may be placed in a Bledsoe knee brace post-operatively. If so, you will need to wear this brace **AT ALL TIMES**.

#### **The Brace needs to be:**

- Locked in Full Extension (0 Degrees) until Your Postoperative Visit (10 to 14 Days)
- Open between 0 to 90 Degrees until Your Postoperative Visit (10 to 14 Days)
- Completely Open 0 to 140 Degrees until Your Postoperative Visit (10 to 14 Days)

You will be instructed in the recovery room about how much weight you can place on your operated leg. Crutches or cane may be used to help you walk.

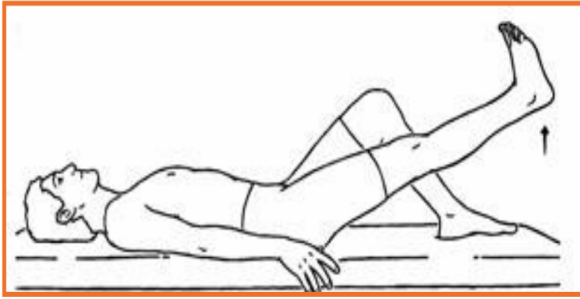
#### **Weight Bearing Status on the Operative Leg:**

- Full Weight Bearing
- Partial Weight Bearing (up to 50%)
- Toe Touch Weight Bearing
- No Weight Bearing

While in the recovery room, the nurses will show you how to put on or take off your brace and Walk/climb stairs safely. **Please listen to them carefully.**

Elevating your leg with 1-2 pillows for the first 72 hours after surgery is essential to help reduce swelling.

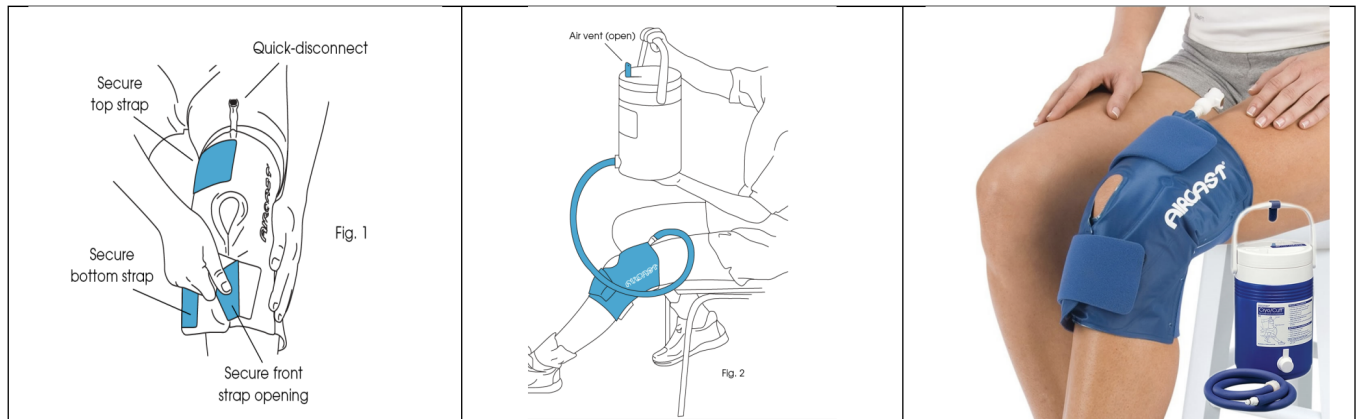
Straight leg raises (**with brace on**) and ankle pumps are encouraged after surgery to prevent blood clots. Please do this 2 to 3 times per day.



## CRYOTHERAPY or COLD THERAPY

Cryotherapy (Cold therapy) is a **very important** part of pain control after surgery. The cold temperature will help control swelling and reduce pain. This can be done several ways – with an ice pack or a cold therapy unit. Cold therapy units are more effective in concentrating the cold to the surgical site via a molded wrap. Cold water is then circulated through the wrap, delivering cold to all sides of the joint. Cold therapy units come 2 ways - Cold therapy only and Cold therapy with compression: Cryocuff® (cold only) – cold therapy via a molded wrap. You may elect to use only an ice pack or a Cryocuff®. Another option is ordering an Ice Gel Pack online to cool the knee.

Use an ice bag or Cryocuff as often as possible for the first 14 days, then as needed for pain relief. Do not wrap the wound too thickly or the Cryocuff cold may not penetrate as well. Do not use the Cryocuff or Ice for a prolonged time directly onto the skin to avoid frostbite. Please follow the instructions.



## ALL ARTHROSCOPIC AND OPEN KNEE PROCEDURES

**On the day after your surgery, please take an 81mg Enteric Coated Aspirin one time per day for FOUR weeks.** Do not take the Aspirin if you are currently on a blood thinner (Coumadin, Plavix, etc) or have any stomach pain while taking anti-inflammatory medications. Do not take Aspirin if you had a gastric bypass in the past or any other contraindications to NSAIDs.

**PLEASE DO NOT TAKE ANY OTHER ANTI-INFLAMMATORIES  
(e.g. Naprosyn / Celebrex /Mobic) IN ADDITION TO THE ASPIRIN.**

## WOUND CARE

- You may remove the operative dressing 3 days after your surgery.
- You may remove the operative dressing 7 days after your surgery.
- You may **NOT** remove the operative dressing until you see Dr. Li's physician assistant in clinic.

Apply Band-Aids to the wounds. **DO NOT REMOVE** the Steri-strips. Please **DO NOT USE** Bacitracin or other ointments on the incision. An ACE wrap may be used to help control swelling, but be careful not to wrap the ACE too tightly. For larger incisions, a sterile gauze dressing may be used on the incision. (You can purchase these at the local pharmacy – CVS / Walgreens / Etc.)

There may be a small amount of bleeding and/or fluid leaking at the surgical site. **THIS IS NORMAL.** The knee is filled with fluid during arthroscopic surgery, sometimes causing leakage for 24-36 hours. You may change or reinforce the bandage as needed.

There will be more swelling 1-3 days after your surgery compared to the amount that you experienced on the day of your surgery. **THIS IS NORMAL.** The swelling will decrease by using Ice or Cryocuff and over time.

**You may shower on Post-Op Day # 3** using a water-tight plastic seal over your knee. Using Glad Cling Wrap or Press'n Seal with a plastic bag on top wrapped with tape on either side of your knee is most recommended for a water tight closure. After showering, please dry the incision area and cover with small Band-Aid (arthroscopic portal sites) or sterile gauze (open knee incisions).

If the incision is clean and dry **7 days after surgery**, you may shower with the wound exposed to the water **WITHOUT** scrubbing the area. You may gently wash **around** the incision with a washcloth, then gently pat the area dry.

**ALWAYS KEEP THE WOUND CLEAN AND DRY. Do not soak** the knee in water. **Do not go swimming** in a pool, hot tub or ocean until at least 4 weeks after your sutures are removed.

If you had an Open Knee Surgery with Dr. Li and an **Aquacel** surgical dressing is applied to your knee, then **YOU CAN SHOWER 3 DAYS AFTER SURGERY WITH THE DRESSING INTACT.** These special dressings are water proof. Do NOT remove the dressing for 7 days after surgery. You may change the dressing on day 7 and leave open to air if the incision is clean and dry. If there is any small opening or drainage from the incision, please cover with a sterile gauze for another 7 days until you see Dr. Li's physician assistant in clinic for your first post-operative appointment.

**IF THERE IS PERSISTENT WOUND DRAINAGE AND REDNESS AFTER 7 DAYS FROM SURGERY, PLEASE CALL DR. LI'S OFFICE.**

## DRIVING INSTRUCTIONS and RESTRICTIONS

**\*\*IMPORTANT\*\* - ABSOLUTELY NO DRIVING WHILE TAKING ANY NARCOTIC PAIN MEDICATION (VICODIN / PERCOCET / OXYCODONE, etc.) - it is against the law to operate a**

motor vehicle under the influence of any controlled substances (even when legally prescribed). Narcotics impair both motor ability and judgment.

As a result of your surgery, your reaction time will be greatly slowed. Thus, in the case an emergency arises – i.e. you need to slam on brakes, depress the clutch, or turn the wheel - you may not be able to do so quickly and risk harm to yourself or others.

If your **RIGHT KNEE** is the operative side, you **MAY NOT DRIVE FOR 6 WEEKS**. It is important to regain adequate quadriceps control before operating a motor vehicle.

If your **LEFT KNEE** is the operative side **AND** you drive an Automatic Transmission vehicle, you may drive a few days **AFTER** you finish taking your pain medication. It is important that you feel confident in your ability to respond efficiently before attempting to drive.

### **FIRST FOLLOW-UP AFTER SURGERY**

You should have your follow-up appointment scheduled at the time of the preoperative visit and prior to surgery with Dr. Li's physician assistant. If you do not have a scheduled postoperative visit, please call the office to schedule a follow-up appointment for 10-14 days after your surgery date.

- (617) 638-5633 (BMC - Shapiro Office)
- (617) 358-3400 (BU - Ryan Center)
- (617) 638-8932 (Anisse Rodriguez – Dr. Li's Scheduler)

Please bring your arthroscopic pictures (given to you in the recovery room after surgery) with you to your first postoperative visit. Dr. Li's physician assistant will review these arthroscopic pictures with you during this visit and will also outline your post-operative physical therapy protocol. Please start your physical therapy in the next week unless otherwise instructed differently by Dr. Li's physician assistant.

If Dr. Li given you the PT script in the PACU after surgery, please make appt with PT as soon as possible after surgery to get started with PT.

If you lost the physical therapy script or the protocol, please call Dr. Li's office at the numbers above and go to Dr. Li's website to get the updated PT protocol. ([www.tigerortho.com](http://www.tigerortho.com))

### **ADDITIONAL FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENTS**

Your first visit with Dr. Li after surgery is about 8 to 10 weeks from the date of your surgery.

Please make appointment to see him at your 2-week post-operative visit with his physician assistant.

If you bring your arthroscopic pictures with you at this visit, Dr. Li can go over all the pictures with you again in clinic.

## CHECKLIST

- Identify a Caregiver/family member to help with preparing meals, hygiene, dressing, and activities of daily living (cleaning, shopping, pet care, etc).
- Identify a Caregiver/family member to assist in driving you to and from appointments.
- Make your post-operative appointment (for 10-14 days after surgery) with Dr. Li's physician Assistant
- Make your post-op Physical Therapy appointment (for after the 1st post-operative visit). The PT script will be given to you at the first postoperative visit.
- Have your pain medications filled at the pharmacy by your family members before you go home so that they are available for you.
- Please visit Dr. Li's website if you have any additional questions ([www.tigerortho.com](http://www.tigerortho.com))

### PLEASE NOTIFY OUR OFFICE IMMEDIATELY IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OCCURS

#### **Boston Medical Center - Phone Number (617) 638-5633**

- Excessive bleeding from the incision site
- Excessive non-bloody wound drainage beyond the first 7 days from surgery
- Poor pain control with your medications
- Numbness or tingling of the hand not related to bruising.
  - If you had a knee block, then numbness and tingling is expected for the first 48 hours.  
Please contact the anesthesiologist if you have persistent numbness after the first 48 hours.
- Fever  $> 101.5^{\circ}$  after postoperative day #3
- Increased redness or drainage along incision after 7 days
- Calf pain or leg swelling
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Any other concerns /questions

