



## **Postoperative Instructions following Knee Arthroscopy**

### **Dr. William Cooney**

You will be undergoing (or have undergone) a procedure in which an arthroscope (camera) and small instruments are placed through 3-3 incisions around your knee.

It is anticipated that you will have one or more of the following procedures done (based on your preoperative symptoms and exams):

Diagnostic arthroscopy – evaluation of the structures within the knee joint including the cartilage surfaces, meniscus, and ligaments, and joint lining.

Partial meniscectomy – debridement/partial removal of a portion of the meniscus.

Cartilage debridement (chondroplasty) – debridement or shaving of the cartilage covering the end of the femur, tibia, or patella (thighbone, shin bone, or knee cap) at the knee joint

Removal of loose body: removal of a free floating or loose body from within the joint

Plica excision: removal or excision of a painful fold within the joint lining.

### **Postoperative Care:**

**Early Postoperative Instruction:** Each of the above procedures is a debridement or removal of tissue, bone, or cartilage without the actual repair of structures that require healing (other than the small skin incisions). Resultantly, you do not need to protect against damaging a repair (as you would if we used sutures to repair the meniscus or place holes in the bone to stimulate cartilage growth). Thus, you may use the knee as tolerated and bear as much weight as is comfortable. Early range of motion (ROM) is important and often allows for an earlier return of pain free full ROM.

**Wound Care:** You likely have 2-3 small surgical incisions. These have been closed with suture which will be removed at your first postoperative appointment. These have been covered with a sterile dressing and ACE wrap that should remain in place for 48 hours. Following its removal, band aids may be placed over the incisions. Once dry (no drainage) they may stay covered with band aids or you may leave them uncovered. You may shower after 72 hours. Water may run over the incisions but no soaking (bathtub, pool, hot tub, ect) until after the recheck appointment. Mild redness or inflammation around the incisions is normal. Drainage may occur for 3-4 days and is typically

secondary to the fluid used to distend the joint and visualize during the arthroscopy. Worsening redness, pain, or excess or foul-smelling drainage should be reported to Dr. Cooney. You are encouraged to use the white TED hose that have been provided. These may decrease your risk for blood clots and also provide compression to decrease swelling associated with the surgery.

**Pain medication:** You have been provided with a prescription for Vicodin or Percocet (combination of narcotic and Tylenol). This should be used as necessary for pain control.

**Physical Therapy:** You may be provided with a referral for Physical Therapy. Attached to the referral is a rehabilitation protocol that will guide your therapist. Therapy is often a major or key component to your overall income. While formal supervised formal therapy may only take place 2-3 times per week, your therapist will provide you with a home exercise program (HEP) that should be performed 2-3 times daily (your therapist will guide you on how many time per day you should do this).

**Recheck Appointment:** Typically you will be seen 9-14 days from the time of your procedure. At this visit you will likely have your stitches removed and be examined to assess the progress with your recovery

**Questions or Concerns:** Should you have questions or concerns following the surgery but prior to your recheck appointment please to not hesitate to contact Dr. Cooney and his staff. Please call 303-772-1600. During working hours you will be directed to the clinical staff working with Dr. Cooney. After working hours, you will be connected with Dr. Cooney or the on-call physician. Please reserve after hour calls for matters that need to be addressed urgently. Pain medication requests should not be made over the weekend.