



DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS – KNEE SURGERY

What should I expect after the procedure? The surgery is done at Calvary hospital under local or general Anaesthetic. You will be transferred to the Recovery room and will be able to go home when you are comfortable. You will need someone to drive you home.

Wound care: You will have a compression bandage covering your knee. Excessive bleeding may require re-bandaging. Leave the compression bandage in place untouched for 48 hours, then you can remove it and re-wrap it as required for swelling control, leaving the dressing underneath in place. These dressings should remain intact until the tapes are removed 10-14 days at post-operative review.

The incisions may be slightly tender and puffy for 1-2 months post-operatively and will benefit from gentle massage once healed.

Pain relief: Paracetamol and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications are usually enough to relieve mild pain. If you are given a prescription for stronger pain relief, you should have this filled at the hospital or go to a pharmacy on the way home to have this prescription filled.

Elevate the leg and use an ice pack (e.g. packet of frozen peas wrapped lightly in a tea-towel). Check the bandages are not too tight and consider unwrapping and re-wrapping a little less tightly.

Resuming activity: You should rest, either sitting or lying with the leg elevated for the first 2-3 days. You should move your ankle and foot and gently flex and extend your knee every hour or so. You should have less pain by the 3rd or 4th day, and you may start to get up and around and increase your walking.

The amount of swelling varies and depends on the pre-operative state of your knee and how much is done during the procedure.

You can reduce the pain and swelling by:

- Rest
- Ice the knee (with ice cubes in a wet towel) for 15 minutes every 3-4 hours. You should frequently check your leg to ensure that it is pink not white or blue, as it is a sign of an ice burn.
- Compression bandage
- Knee elevation and use of crutches to keep the weight off your knee.

Although these wounds are only small, the surgery inside your joint is quite significant and your knee will take time to recover. Most people with an office job return to work at a week to ten days. More active jobs may require up to 4-6 weeks off work. It is very important not to push your knee too hard, as this will slow the healing process.

Who to call if problems arise? Contact your surgeon's office, your GP, or the Emergency Department at your nearest public hospital. There is no Emergency Department at Calvary Hospital.

If you have had a general anaesthetic: in the first 24 hours after your procedure you should not:

- Make any important decisions or sign any legal documents.
- Drink alcohol
- Do not operate hazardous machinery.

Driving after knee Arthroscopy: Knee arthroscopy surgery is performed under local and/or general Anaesthetic. The general Anaesthetic medication that we use, can sometimes take some time to clear from your body. You may feel that you are “awake” after the procedure, and that you are alright to drive home straight away. However, the medication may still impair your judgment and physical skills for several hours and make it unsafe for you to drive.

If you are in poor health, taking other medications or if you have been given higher doses of Anaesthetic agents it may take several days for you to be able to resume your normal activity, including driving.

It is very important for your safety and safety of others that you do not drive a car until you have recovered physically and mentally from the Anaesthetic. Because you have had the knee operated on, this is best left until after your first post-operative review.

Running Low on Medication: Reminder that our practice closes at 3pm on Fridays. To ensure you receive your script in time, please contact our rooms prior to 12pm to request further medication.