

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FEMORAL CONDYLE MICROFRACTURE

MEDICATION

- One of three pain medications, Norco (hydrocodone), Tramadol or Tylenol #3 will be prescribed to you. Take as instructed and as needed.
 - Pain medication may cause constipation. You may take an over the counter stool softener (Colace, Senekot, etc) to help prevent this problem.
 - You should take these medicines with food or they may nauseate you.
 - You may not drive or operate heavy equipment while on narcotics
 - Pain medication is refilled on an individual basis and only during office hours.
- If you have a nerve block, **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE BLOCK COMPLETELY WEARS OFF.**
 - Most patients find it helpful to take two pills 8-10 hours after surgery and scheduling two pills every four to six hours the first night and morning after and then gradually wean off as tolerated.
- Try to avoid anti-inflammatories such as Ibuprofen or Naprosyn for at least **six weeks** after surgery as this may impair tissue healing.
- Take one regular aspirin (325 mg) once a day for 14 days beginning the day after surgery unless you are allergic, have been prescribed another blood thinner or have a history of stomach ulcers.
- If prescribed Lovenox or Xarelto for prevention of blood clots, begin the day AFTER surgery and finish all injections or pills.
- **Resume all home medications unless otherwise instructed.**
- Call the office (713-486-7550) if you are having an adverse reaction to the medicine.

WOUND CARE

- You may remove your bandages two days after surgery unless instructed otherwise. Do not remove the steri-strips (small pieces of tape) covering the incisions.
- Unless instructed otherwise, you may shower after your bandages have been removed. NO submersion of wounds (bath, hot tub, pool) is recommended for a minimum of 2 weeks after surgery.
- To shower or bath with your dressing still on, wrap the leg in a large plastic garbage bag with tape at both ends.

EXERCISE

- **Physical Therapy is a key component of recovery and should start within 1-3 days after surgery.** This appointment should be made **before surgery** to ensure you begin therapy on time. If you have difficulty doing this, contact the office for assistance.
- If you have had the addition of BioCartilage, you will delay bending your knee for the first five days and your knee will remain locked straight in the brace to allow for the glue to set.
- Regaining full extension quickly is critical to your recovery. **DO NOT** keep pillows under your knee leaving your knee in a bent position.
- A handout of exercises will be provided immediately after surgery that you may begin as soon as you are comfortable.

CRUTCHES

- **Do not put weight on your leg until instructed by Dr. Flores.** This is critical to help with the success of healing.
- You will typically be **non-weight bearing** for six weeks with crutches.
- Crutches will be needed until physical therapy and Dr. Flores deem them unnecessary based on the time from surgery, the strength in the involved leg and when you can walk with a **normal gait.**

BRACE

- A post-operative brace may be used after surgery. It should remain locked in full extension and is to be worn at all times while not in the motion (CPM) machine or doing your exercises, including sleep.
- You will be instructed when it can bend and how long you need to use it.
- The brace is necessary for even the simplest tasks such as going to the restroom to protect your knee while your muscles are weak.

CPM

- A motion machine is generally recommended and may be helpful in healing after microfracture but is often not covered by insurance.
- If you have had the addition of BioCartilage, you will delay bending your knee for the first five days.
- The motion machine should be used **without** your brace for 6-8 hours a day as tolerated for 6 weeks to help with healing.
- Start at 0-30 degrees and increase as tolerated up to 90 degrees unless instructed otherwise but do not sleep in the machine.
- If you are unable to rent one for the entire period, your rehab exercises are critical to allow for the best chance of healing.

COLD THERAPY

- Ice should be used to assist in pain and swelling. Do not apply directly to exposed skin. Elevate your leg and try to ice 20-30 minutes every 3-4 hours if possible.
- A simple bag of frozen peas may be used as an inexpensive ice pack. Buy several bags of peas, place in a gallon size zip-lock bag making them about an inch thick and removing as much air as possible. Return to freezer, lying flat when done.

BRUISING

- The lower leg may become swollen and bruised, which is normal. This is from the fluid and blood moving down the leg and should resolve in 10-14 days.
- Elevate your leg above heart level to help assist in decreasing swelling.
- **If you experience severe calf pain or swelling, call the office immediately or go to the nearest emergency room.**

EMERGENCIES

- If you have an emergency contact Dr. Flores's office at 713-486-7550.
 - Uncontrolled nausea or vomiting, reaction to medication, inability to urinate, fever greater than 101.5 (low grade fevers 1-2 days after surgery is normal), severe pain not relieved by pain medication, redness or continued drainage around incisions (a small amount is normal), calf pain or severe swelling.
- **If you are having chest pain or difficulty breathing, call 911 or go to the closest emergency room.**

FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENT

- Please make your first post-op visit 5-7 after surgery if not done so already.
- **If you have any questions, please call the office at 713-486-7550.**