



Sports Medicine & Shoulder Surgery

617.667.3940 • bidmc.org/sports

ACL Reconstruction Post-Operative Instructions

Medications

You will be given two prescriptions- one for pain and the other to control inflammation. The pain medication is a codeine derivative and should be taken if necessary. The medication to control inflammation should be taken as directed.

Dressing

Leave your dressing on unless your first post-op doctor or therapy visit is more than 48 hours after your surgery. After 48 hours you may remove your dressing. **LEAVE THE TAPE STRIPS OVER YOUR INCISIONS.** These will stay on for 1 ½ - 2 weeks and will slowly peel off.

Showering

You may shower 48 hours after your surgery and get your incisions wet. **DO NOT** immerse in a tub or pool for 7 - 10 days to avoid excessive scarring and risk of infection.

Ice Packs

Keep the Ice Packs on at all times, exchanging them every hour while awake. Icing is very important to decrease swelling and pain and improve mobility. After 24 hours, continue to use the cuff 3 - 4 times a day, 15 - 20 minutes each time to keep swelling to a minimum.

Weight Bearing

You should not put weight on your leg until instructed to do so by your therapist.

Femoral Nerve Block

If you were given an injection into your upper thigh to block the pain, you will have limited control your quadriceps (thigh) muscle. Therefore, you should be relatively pain free but you will have little control of your leg. You should wear your immobilizer until your first physical therapy appointment when you will be instructed on how long and when you should wear your immobilizer.

Activities

Rest and elevate your leg for the first 24 hours. Do **NOT** place a pillow under your knee. Elevate with a pillow under your calf and ankle. It is very important to get you leg as straight as possible as soon as possible.

Goals

Full extension in one week and normal range of motion within six weeks of surgery.

When to Contact Us

If you experience severe pain that your pain medication does not relieve, you should let us know. If you experience a temperature over 101.5°, redness or swelling in your thigh or calf, please contact our office, daytime, evenings or weekends at (617) 667-3940.