



Post-Operative Instructions – Arthroscopic Meniscectomy / Chondroplasty

Diet

- Start with clear liquids and light foods.
- Return to your normal diet if you are not nauseated.

Wound Care

- Keep your operative dressing in place; loosen if foot/ankle swelling occurs.
- Some bleeding and swelling is normal; reinforce soaked dressings with additional gauze or ACE wrap.
- Keep incisions clean and dry.
- Showering allowed 2 days after surgery:
 - Remove dressing before shower.
 - Incisions may get wet but do not submerge the leg (no baths, soaking, or scrubbing).
- Bruising around the knee, foot, and ankle is normal.
- Do not pick at incisions or remove sutures until your post-op visit.

Medications

- Numbing medication from surgery lasts 8–24 hours.
- Narcotic pain medication may be needed briefly; take as directed.
- Common side effects: nausea, drowsiness, constipation.
 - Take with food.
 - Use over-the-counter laxatives if constipated.
- Anti-nausea medication (Zofran or Phenergan) may be taken as needed.
- Contact the office if nausea/vomiting persists.
- Do not drive or operate machinery while taking narcotics.
- Ibuprofen 200–400 mg may be taken between narcotic doses to:



- Smooth pain peaks and valleys
- Reduce narcotic use
- Extend time between doses
- Keep each medication on its own schedule.

Activity

- Elevate the operative leg above heart level whenever possible.
- Do not place pillows under the knee; place them under the foot/ankle instead.
- Use crutches; full weight bearing is allowed unless instructed otherwise.
- Avoid prolonged standing/walking for 7–10 days.
- Avoid long sitting without elevation and avoid long-distance travel for 2 weeks.
- No driving until cleared by your physician.
- Return to sedentary work or school in 3–4 days if pain is tolerable.

Ice Therapy

- Begin immediately after surgery.
- Use icing machine continuously or ice packs for a total of 6–8 hours per day.
- Always place a barrier (towel, clothing) between skin and ice.
- If using an ice machine, periodically check skin under the pad.
- Continue icing until your first post-op visit, keeping the leg elevated.

Exercise

- Begin exercises 24 hours after surgery unless instructed otherwise:
 - Straight leg raises
 - Heel slides
 - Ankle pumps
- Discomfort and stiffness are normal.



- Bending the knee is safe unless told otherwise.
- Perform exercises 3–4 times daily until your first post-op visit.
- Motion goals for first visit:
 - Full extension (straight)
 - 90° flexion (bend)
- Formal physical therapy begins 3–4 days post-op, typically 1–2 times per week for 6–12 weeks.

When to Call the Office

Call 214-265-3260 or Dr. Heinrich at 214-326-9141 for:

- Painful swelling or numbness
- Unrelenting pain
- Fever over 101°F or chills
- Redness around incisions
- Continuous drainage or bleeding (small amount is normal)
- Difficulty breathing
- Excessive nausea/vomiting

Appointments

- First post-op appointment is typically 10–14 days after surgery.
- If not already scheduled, call the office to arrange it