

From the office of:

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**POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS
PROCEDURE: KNEE REPLACEMENT**

Diet: Begin with liquids and light foods (crackers, soup, etc.). Progress to your normal diet if you are not nauseated. You may have been given a prescription for an anti-nausea medication to be taken if needed.

Pain Medication: You have been given a prescription for narcotic pain medicine. These types of medications can cause side effects including nausea, constipation, sedation and confusion. We recommend these only be used for 1 to 2 weeks after surgery. Do not drive while taking narcotic pain medication. An over-the-counter stool softener or laxative, such as Colace, Dulcolax, or Senokot, is recommended to prevent constipation. At any time, acetaminophen (Tylenol) may be substituted instead of your narcotic medicine and used for pain control. Do not exceed 3000 mg of acetaminophen in a 24 hour period. Do not combine with alcohol. You may also use Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (NSAID's) such as aspirin, ibuprofen, Motrin, naproxen, or Aleve for pain and swelling control after surgery.

Response to Surgery: It is normal to have pain and swelling in your leg after surgery. It will take several months for this to go away. Keep your leg elevated as much as possible to help with swelling control. It is also common to notice bruising around the leg.

Ice: Keep ice on your surgical site for 30 minutes at a time, then 30 minutes off. We recommend having two ice packs. Keep the unused pack in your freezer and rotate the packs on and off the surgical site as often as needed. Continue to use the ice as often as possible for the first 7-10 days, then as needed for pain relief.

Wound Care: Do not remove your surgical dressing until 2 weeks after your surgery unless it becomes saturated. You may have some water or blood spotting on the dressing, which is normal. If this seems excessive, call our office for further instructions.

Weight-Bearing: Your weightbearing status is "as tolerated" which means you are allowed to put as much weight on the operated leg as you are comfortable with. You will need to use a walker, crutches or a cane for 3-4 weeks after surgery until you can bear weight comfortably on the leg without them.

Showering: As soon as you feel up to it, you may shower. The surgical dressing must stay dry, however. You may remove the brace in the shower. We recommend purchasing a shower chair to facilitate safe showering.

Exercises: Beginning post-operative day #1, perform the following exercises:

- Ankle Pumps: While sitting, pump your ankles up and down 10 times.
- Quad Sets: While sitting or lying, tighten your quadriceps muscle; hold for 10 sec x 10
- Walking: At least 100 feet.
- Range of motion: Straighten and bend your knee as far as your pain level allows and hold for 30 seconds. Repeat 5 times.
- Do these at least once an hour.
- ***You should also schedule an appointment to see your physical therapist ASAP after surgery to begin working on the rehabilitation protocol provided.***

Driving: You will be unable to drive until you are off narcotic medications and you have discontinued your gait assist device. This may be up to 6 weeks after surgery. It is important that you feel very confident in your ability to respond quickly to changing conditions before attempting to drive. Make sure you can safely get in and out of your car, as well.

Appointment: A follow-up appointment should be scheduled for you. If you didn't receive an appointment, or if you need to change your appointment time, please call our office at 406-454-2171.

Problems: If you develop severe pain, a fever greater than 101.5°, redness around the incision, thick yellow drainage from the incision, excessive bleeding, or persistent nausea and vomiting please call our office at **406-454-2171**.

Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Our staff will be available to answer questions

Weekends & Evenings

Our after-hours emergency exchange will be able to contact Dr. Blackman

For more information, please visit ajborthopedics.com

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