

ACL Reconstruction

Post-Operative Day #0-3

- Relative bedrest – (The more you stay off your feet, the less swelling you will have)
- Ice and elevation – Ice for about 20 minutes/hour
- TED Hose – These will help prevent swelling as well as help prevent blood clots
- Use the elevation pillow provided as much as possible.
- Do not place pillows under your knees
- Avoid NSAIDs (Ibuprofen, Motrin, Aleve, etc.) until cleared by your doctor
- Crutches if needed, but you may get up as tolerated
- You may remove your TED hose and dressings and shower on day 2. Cover wounds with Press'N Seal (available at grocery store or pharmacy) No Baths!
- Every 2 hours while awake do physical therapy on your own focusing on:
Knee hyperextension and flexion, and straight leg raises (see pictures)

Post-Operative Day #4-10

- Increase activity as tolerated
- Continue TED hose and elevation pillow until office follow up (7-10 days post operatively)
- Wean off of narcotics as you can tolerate
- If you are using crutches, try to wean off of them and walk without a limp
- Continue ice and elevation, especially after activity
- Work hard on your physical therapy. At first post op visit want to see
 1. Full hyperextension and flexion to at least 120°
 2. Good quadriceps control
 3. Minimal swelling

After first post-operative follow up:

- Continue ice/elevation as needed for swelling.
- Formal physical therapy program
- Driving generally is OK when off of all narcotics, and you have good strength of your leg
 - Important that you not be physically limited due to your surgery if you are going to drive

Extension Exercises



Heel Props

While sitting or lying down on your back, prop your heel of the affected leg up over a towel or roll, just beyond the lower calf.

Hold this position for 30 seconds. Repeat 2 to 3 times. Do about 4 to 6 sessions per day.



Towel Pull

Sit with the affected leg fully extended. Wrap a towel around your heel. Hold the ends of the towel with one hand. As you pull the towel toward you, try to lift your heel off the table slightly. Push down firmly on your thigh to help stabilize the leg.

Hold this position for 30 seconds. Repeat 2 to 3 times. Do about 4 to 6 sessions per day.

Flexion Exercises



Leg Pulls*

Pull one knee to your chest. Hold for 30 to 60 seconds. Return to the starting position. Repeat 2 times. Switch legs.

Repeat 2 to 3 times. Do about 4 to 6 sessions per day.

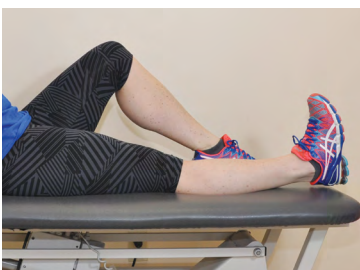


Towel Pulls*

Sit on the floor with your legs out and feet flexed forward. Place a towel around the heel of your injured leg. Pull the towel toward you, sliding your heel toward your buttocks. Keep the heel in contact with the floor. When you feel a stretch (tightness) in the knee, hold the position. Slide your foot back out.

Hold this position for 30 seconds. Repeat 2 to 3 times. Do about 4 to 6 sessions per day.

Strengthening Drills



Leg Raise*

Sit on the floor with your affected leg straight, the other bent. Tighten the thigh muscles on the top of your straight leg. You should feel the muscles contract. Raise that leg 6 to 8 inches. Then lower it slowly and steadily to the floor. Relax.

Do 3 sets of 10 repetitions 2 times a day.

All stretches should be done in a comfortable environment and in a relaxed atmosphere. Positions should be held for one minute on each leg and then repeated on the opposite leg.