

**Dr Norah Matthies**

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[www.uhnsports.ca](http://www.uhnsports.ca)



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## **Post-operative Instructions After Knee Surgery**

### **General:**

The surgical dressing, including tensor wrap, should be left on for the first 72 hours after surgery.

- After 72 hours you may:
  - Remove the tensor wrap and bulky gauze. Please do not remove the clear dressings underneath. If the small dressings underneath fall off, please cover the incisions with fresh, clean gauze and do not remove the white steri-strips that were placed over the incision. You may reapply tensor wrap if desired for compression.
  - You may shower but do not get the incision site wet. Please use a shower bag/saran wrap to keep the incisions sealed off from water and dry. Sponge bathing is a good alternative. Do not soak or submerge the incision under water (this includes no swimming / hot tub / sauna).

### **Swelling:**

In the first 72 hours post-surgery, apply an ice pack or cooling device (Game Ready or similar) to your knee for 20-30 minutes every 1-2 hours while awake. After 72 hours, you may perform icing for 20-30 minutes, 2-3 times per day.

NOTE: If you are using a knee brace, the brace should be removed for the icing process. Additionally, elevation of the extremity above the heart level is helpful to reduce swelling. Please be conscious to place a pillow under the ankle and NOT under the knee when trying to elevate the extremity. Never use a pillow behind your knee to prop it up for comfort or for sleeping.

### **Knee Brace and Range of Motion:**

\_\_\_ No brace needed.

\_\_\_ Per ACL rehabilitation protocol ([www.uhnsports.ca](http://www.uhnsports.ca))

\_\_\_ Brace locked in extension for one week or until first post-operative office visit. Brace locked in extension for walking, can remove brace after able to do 10 straight leg raises. May unlock for heel slides. Sleep in brace until first post operative visit.

\_\_\_ Brace locked in extension for one week or until first post-operative office visit. Brace locked in extension for ambulation, may unlock for heel slides. After first post op visit, unlock within range of motion limitations, if applicable. Sleep in brace until no restriction on range of motion.

\_\_\_ Range of motion: Limitations \_\_\_\_\_

**Weightbearing Status:**

- \_\_\_ No weightbearing on operative leg
- \_\_\_ Partial weightbearing on operative leg (<50%)
- \_\_\_ Weightbearing as tolerated.

**Post operative exercises and Physical Therapy:**

\_\_\_ Begin exercises (ankle/calf pump, quad sets, straight leg raise and heel slide- see chart below) on post operative day # 1 or as tolerated.

\_\_\_ Please schedule your first Physical Therapy post-surgery appointment to occur **4-5 days** after surgery.

\_\_\_ Please schedule your first Physical Therapy post-surgery appointment to occur **7-10 days** after surgery.

**Medications:**

\_\_\_ Acetaminophen – For pain. Take for 14 days as directed. Do not exceed 4000 mg in 24 hours.

\_\_\_ Celecoxib – For pain and inflammation. Take for 7 days duration as directed.

\_\_\_ Oxycodone – Take on an as needed basis for pain that is not controlled with Acetaminophen and Celecoxib.

\_\_\_ Antibiotic (Most often Keflex or Clindamycin – please complete the entire 5-day prescription.

\_\_\_ Aspirin (For DVT/blood clot prophylaxis) – to start the morning after surgery.

\_\_\_ Eliquis (For DVT/blood clot prophylaxis) – to start the morning after surgery.

**Important Notes:**

- If you had a nerve block, the block will typically wear off in the middle of the night. You can take a dose of the oxycodone before you go to bed to help the pain as the block wears off.
- Pain medication (opioids) can make you constipated. We recommend increasing your fiber intake and drinking plenty of water. You are permitted to use the over-the-counter stool softeners such as RestoraLAX or Senokot if needed.
- If you find that the Celecoxib is upsetting your stomach, please call our office to review the medications.
- If you need a refill on medication, please contact our office via email or phone at (416) 603-5110. Please do not send a message via Epic.
- If you have chest pain, shortness of breath, fainting, or fever above 38°C, please present to your nearest emergency department for assessment.
- Please contact the office if you notice any increased redness or drainage from the incision sites. It is normal for the leg to appear pink. This is from the solution used to clean the leg before surgery. If unsure if pink vs. red, trying wiping with a clean wet towel.

You will receive an appointment by email from Frances Roque, which will be scheduled close to the 2-week mark after surgery. If you did not receive an appointment, please call (416) 603-5110.

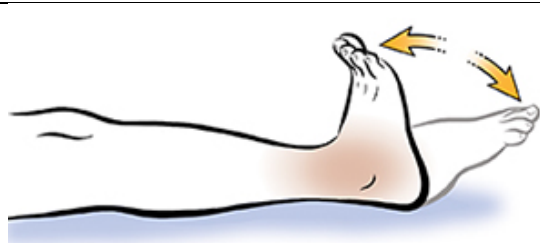
IF IT IS AFTER BUSINESS HOURS AND YOU NEED IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE, PLEASE CALL (416) 603-2581 (TORONTO WESTERN HOSPITAL) AND ASK TO SPEAK WITH THE ON CALL ORTHOPAEDIC RESIDENT.

## POST-OPERATIVE EXERCISES

**\*\* You may begin these exercises on post operative day # 1 or as tolerated\*\***

### Ankle / Calf Pumps

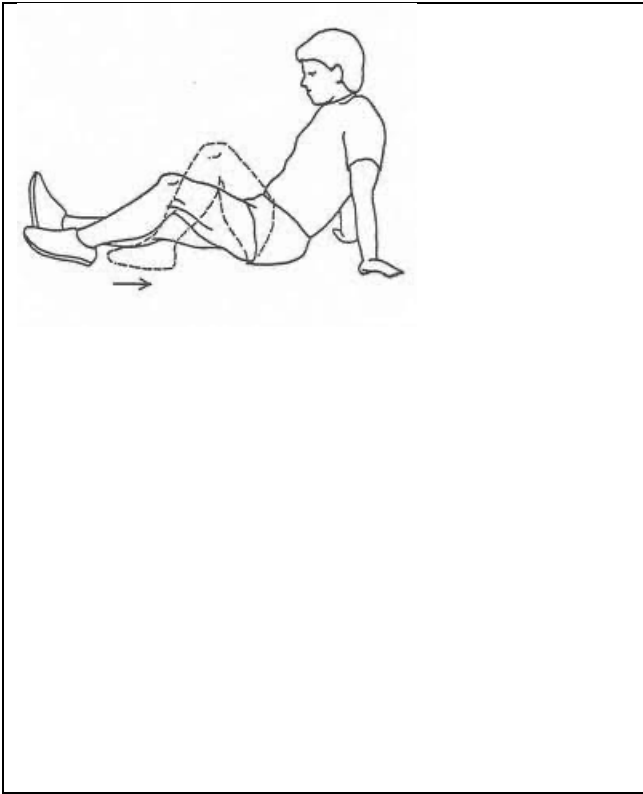
Perform 20 times every hour while awake



- While laying on your back, alternate between pointing your toes and then flexing your foot back toward you
- This helps to circulate your blood and decrease the risk of blood clot

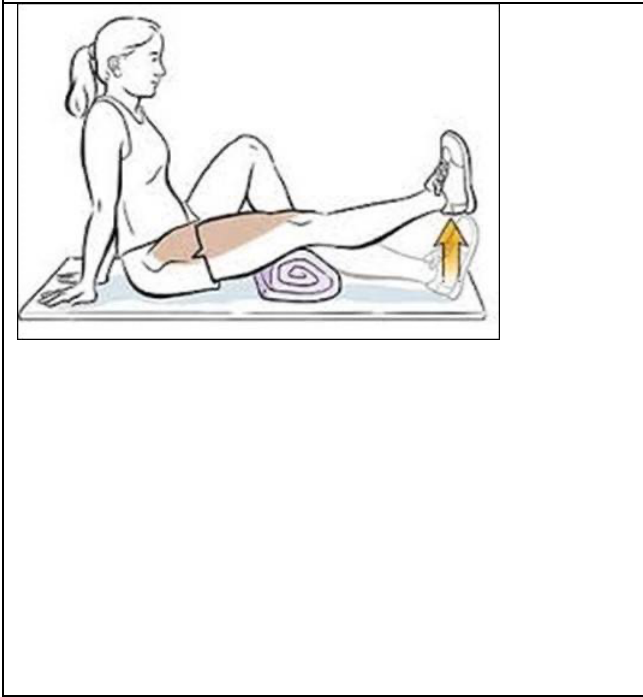
### Heel slides

Perform 10 times per set, for a total of 3 sets daily. This can be done 2-3 times daily or more if you are able to tolerate it



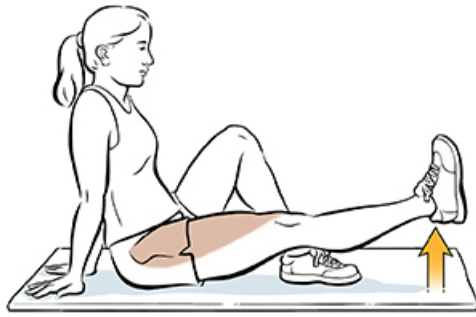
- If you have been instructed not to unlock your brace (see first page of discharge instructions), please omit this exercise
- If wearing knee brace, you may unlock it to perform heel slides,
  - If your range of motion is being limited, your brace will stop you at the set position. We have already set the brace at the time of surgery.
- Slide your heel slowly toward your buttock, as tolerated, and then straighten your leg back to the straight position.

**Quad sets**  
Perform 10 times per set, for a total of 3 sets daily. This can be done 2-3 times daily or more if you are able to tolerate it.



- Lie down flat on your back or sit on the floor with the operative leg straight in front of you, knee flat on the floor.
- Place a small towel (kitchen towel works great for this) under the back of your knee so that the knee is very slightly bent. Tighten the thigh muscle (quadriceps) by pressing the back of your knee into the towel (attempting to straighten the knee fully).
- Hold this for 5-10 seconds and then relax the thigh muscle.

**Straight Leg Raises**  
Perform 10 times per set, for a total of 3 sets daily. This can be done 2-3 times daily or more if you are able to tolerate it



- Lie down flat on your back or sit on the floor with your operative leg straight in front of you, knee flat on the floor. Brace should remain on if you were told that you needed a brace.
- Perform a quad set with the toes pointed directly up.
- Keep your thigh muscles tight and lift your leg straight into the air until your foot is about 1 foot off the floor.
- Hold for approximately 5 seconds before gently lowering your leg back down to resting position flat on the ground.