

SCOS SPORTS MEDICINE
Dr. Scott Graham
Post-Operative Instructions for ACL Reconstruction

- Please read the general instructions sent home with you from the surgery center.
- Take your antibiotics starting on the afternoon of surgery as prescribed for 5 days.
- Take pain relieving medications as prescribed. Try to stay ahead of the pain; don't let it get ahead of you. Pain relieving medication should be taken with food. Only take one pill at a time otherwise you risk having nausea and constipation. You may take another pill as needed thereafter based on your prescription.
- If you have no medical contradictions, you may take an anti-inflammatory (Ibuprofen, Advil, Aleve, Motrin) in addition at a separate time for the first week (7 days only) after surgery.
- Do not drink alcohol, drive a vehicle, operate any machinery or sign a legal document after surgery while taking pain medications. In addition, the effect of the anesthesia administered during the surgery may last for the first 24 hours of the surgery.
- Use ice packs or the ice machine integrated into your brace to control swelling and help with pain. However, make sure that the ice bag/pad is not directly on your skin and does not leak into the dressing.
- I suggest icing your extremity at least 5 times a day for 30min with 1 hour between. Follow this program for 2 weeks after surgery for a faster recovery. Do not fall asleep with ice or the cooling pad on. You may place it on the front and back side of your knee.
- Leave your dressings and brace just as they are until your first post-operative visit which should be in 2-3 days.
- Just elevate your leg by having it lie flat or you may put pillows under your ankle, but not your knee.
- Use crutches and do not put full weight on the operative side unless the instructions you received from the surgery center state zero weight bearing.
- Do active ankle pumps after lower extremity surgery every hour while awake until you are able to walk 150 feet.
- Keep the surgical site dry for 5 days after surgery. You may shower thereafter without covering the surgical site.
- Increased drainage from the incision, this is normal for first 24 hours after surgery. It is mostly water draining out of the joint.

Please consult Dr. Graham or his assistant Brittany immediately (949 586-3200 x 252) if you experience any of the following symptoms:

- Increased redness around the operative site
- Increased swelling that does not decrease with ice and elevation
- Fever greater than 101.4°F
- Sudden calf pain or shortness of breath