

**Total Knee Discharge Instructions**

**Home Safety**

Remove all throw rugs to avoid your walker getting caught.

Wash your sheets and towels prior to use. Avoid animals in your bed, where you sit or lay due to increased risk of infection.

Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, have your family as well. Make sure someone can stay with you for the first week to assist with showers, meals and other daily activities.

**Medications**

A prescription for pain medicine, nausea medication and an antibiotic will be given to you before you leave the hospital. The antibiotics will be taken for 3 days unless indicated otherwise. The nausea and pain medication should be taken as directed as needed. Depending on the surgery, you may also be told to take 325mg of aspirin daily for 30 days or given a blood thinner. This decreases the risk of a blood clot in the deep veins of the legs called a DVT, which can sometimes occur after surgery due to decreased activity.

You may need to take a stool softener twice daily while taking pain medicine. (ex: Colace 100 mg) Pain medicine can slow down bowels causing constipation.

Do not drink alcoholic beverages for 24 hours. Drink plenty of fluids. Resume a regular diet by eating light foods and advance as tolerated. Drink 6-8 glasses of fluids each day.

Do not drive or operate heavy machinery for 24 hours, or while you are taking pain medication.

Effects of the nerve block/spinal will last around 12-48 hours. This may cause tingling/numbness/weakness or feeling like your arm is asleep. Effects of general anesthesia may last up to 48 hours. You may have episodes of drowsiness, nausea or dizziness. These feelings are normal.

**Dressing Care**

Draining from the incision(s) in the first week is normal. Please only call the office for excessive drainage that is soaking through the bandage or running down your leg. Blood visible on the aquacell or honeycomb is normal. Keep dressing clean, dry and intact.

Leave AquaCell/Honeycomb dressing intact. You may shower with the AquaCell/Honeycomb in place as it is waterproof. DO NOT REMOVE.

You may have a zipline dressing over your incision. Cover incision to shower. You can use press and seal kitchen wrap and tape or a trash bag and tape. Remove immediately after the shower and pat your incision dry. Dr. Parker will choose which dressing while in surgery.

Do not apply any lotions or ointment to the incision site. Shower only-do not submerge the incision sites in a hot tub, bathtub or swimming pool.

**Call Dr. Parker’s office at 806-350-2663 for any excessive drainage.**

**Cryotherapy/Ice Bags**

A re-circulating ice water pad may be applied to your dressing after surgery. It consists of a thin, flexible pad with a bladder inside. A tube coming from the bladder connects to a small cooler which allows ice water to circulate through it once the cooler is filled with ice water and is plugged into a wall outlet. There should always be a layer of dressing or thin towel between the pad and the skin to prevent frostbite. We recommend using the unit for the first 2 days continuously, then 6-8 hours per day afterwards. Using the cryotherapy unit will reduce swelling and pain. If the unit is not covered by your insurance, you may discuss payment arrangements with our DME representative. It is not required, but highly recommended. If you are unable to use the cryotherapy unit, use ice packs continuously for 48 hours, then as needed.

**DVT (blood clot) Prophylaxis**

You may have TED hose (white hose) given by the hospital, wear them for 4-6 weeks after surgery. Swelling is normal for a few weeks after hip surgery. At minimum we recommend 2 weeks on the non-operative leg and 4 weeks on the operative leg.

DO NOT walk in your TED hose alone due to risk of slipping and falling. Wear gripper socks or shoes.

You may remove the hose to shower or to clean. You can hand wash them with soap and water and hang to dry. They usually dry in about 30 minutes. You will need assistance to remove and put these back on. Frequently pump ankles back and forth (foot flaps/ankle pumps) throughout the day to promote blood flow and help prevent blood clots.

You will be on a blood thinner, check with your nurse prior to discharge and take as directed.

**Continuous Passive Motion Machine (CPM)**

A knee CPM may be recommended for certain knee procedures. Arrangements will be made with our DME representative for delivery and pick-up if this is needed for your surgery. The machine is designed for you to lay down and the machine moves the leg for you. We recommend using the CPM for 6-8 hours per day. The DME rep will provide specific instructions for use. The machine is very effective at improving flexibility and decreasing pain. If the machine is not covered by your insurance, you may discuss payment arrangements with our DME rep. It is not required, but highly recommended. Start at -10 degrees to 90 degrees. You can increase to 120 degrees as tolerated. Sometimes the CPM moves while you are in it, you can turn a bath rug with the rubber side up and then put your CPM on it.

**Physical Therapy**

You are weight bearing as tolerated (WBAT) after surgery unless told otherwise.

Work on your home physical therapy exercises 3 times a day. Knee extension exercises for 20 minutes, 3 times per day. This will encourage full extension. NO pillows under the knee. You can have a pillow under your ankle.

It is very important to start therapy ASAP after surgery and attend 2-3 times a week as instructed. An appointment should be made for you upon discharge and that information will be in your discharge paperwork. If the therapy facility is closed when you are discharged from the hospital, you will be given instructions to call and schedule your appointment with the physical therapist. PLEASE remember to take your therapy prescription to your first visit as it will have specific instructions on it for the physical therapist.

If you do not know who to use for PT, here are a few options in Amarillo:

* Parker Sports Medicine
* Quail Creek Physical Therapy
* BSA Outpatient PT
* Northwest Outpatient PT
* Total Physical Therapy
* If you live outside of Amarillo, please use the nearest facility to your hometown.

Do frequent foot flaps or pumps 30 times every hour while awake for the first 2 days to help increase circulation. Walking short distances will speed up your recovery. Sit up for meals.

You will not be driving until released from Dr. Parker.

**Follow up appointment**

You will have a follow-up appt 10-14 days after surgery. In most cases, this appointment was made when your surgery was scheduled. Please call 806-350-2663 to confirm appointment details if needed.

**Returning to work/school**

As a general rule, we recommend taking off work at least until your follow-up appointment. You will be given a note to excuse you from work/school on the day of your surgery. If you would like to return to work before your follow-up appointment, please contact our office and make arrangements.

If you are a student, it is up to the discretion, within reason, of you and your parents on how long you will be out of school. Usually, 2-3 days is typical but special considerations may be made on case-by-case basis. However, no PE or Sports until released by Dr. Parker or staff.

**Call our office or go to the Emergency Room if...**

* **You have a fever of 101 or higher, night sweats or chills.**
* **You notice red streaks radiating outwards from your incision(s).**
* **Your incision(s) get worsening redness, swelling, draining pus or severe pain.**
* **You experience shortness of breath or severe pain in your calf (signs of a blood clot)**
* **You have any questions, do not hesitate to call our office.**