



ORTHOPAEDIC
SPECIALISTS
MELBOURNE

Mr Rodney Richardson

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ANTERIOR CRUCIATE LIGAMENT RECONSTRUCTION CARE OF YUR KNEE AFTER SURGERY

SURGERY

After your surgery you will have a pressure bandage on your knee, and your leg with be splinted in a Zimmer Knee Splint. The morning after your surgery you will be seen by the physiotherapist who will mobilise you and ensure you are safe to be discharged. Prior to discharge your nurse will remove the pressure dressing and change it to a tubigrip compression stocking. The waterproof dressings underneath this are to be left intact until your 2-week post-operative visit with Mr Richardson.

You are allowed to fully weight bear on your knee when in the knee splint, but you will be given crutches to make this easier whilst your knee is painful. At rest, the splint can be removed to allow full range of motion exercises, and for ice to be applied to the knee.

On discharge, you should be provided with:

- Post-operative instructions
- Analgesia
- Review appointment (this will normally have been made for you prior to your surgery and referenced in your information pack)
- DVD of your surgery
- Xrays

CARE OF YOUR KNEE AFTER SURGERY

Swelling and discomfort is normal after surgery. This is most apparent in the first 3 days, after which, most of the discomfort should start to settle. Even if you have minimal pain or swelling in the first 3 days you should really rest and not “over do it”.

Unless otherwise instructed, Mr Richardson wants you to walk short distances only in the first 2 weeks.

After your 2-week review with Mr Richardson you will no longer require the splint.

ICING YOUR KNEE

Ice has the effect of controlling pain and inflammation and swelling in your knee after surgery. It is most effective in the first 3 days after surgery and should be used regularly in the post-operative period.

Please have an ice pack ready at home for when you are discharged, so it can be applied immediately when you get home. Always use a thin cloth between ice and your skin (Ice can burn if left on your skin). You can use a commercial ice pack, bag of frozen vegetables or crushed ice.

For the first 3 days, ice your knee regularly during waking hours. Apply the ice for 20 minutes, and then remove for an hour before reapplying. Thereafter, apply after exercising or when the knee becomes sore or tight from swelling.

BANDAGE

You will leave hospital with a tubigrip bandage applied to your knee. This is designed to protect your wounds and apply pressure to stop bleeding and swelling in your knee. The dressings underneath are waterproof, and should cope with small splashes of water from the shower. The waterproof dressings are to be left intact until your review appointment in 2 weeks. You can shower over the top of these dressings, but they are not to be soaked in a bath or pool. If they become loose they can be replaced simply with a Band-Aid.

If you experience significant bleeding from the wounds it will nearly always settle with the reapplication of the PRESSURE DRESSING, ELEVATION of the knee and application of an ICE PACK.

If at any stage you are worried, please call Mr Richardson’s rooms for further advice. In an emergency situation Mr Richardson can be contacted on his mobile telephone.

CRUTCHES

Crutches are used to help rest your knee in the first few days after surgery. They are used to assist you mobilise whilst resting your knee. You do NOT have to remain non-weight bearing. You can wean yourself off the crutches as you recover your confidence and regain your muscle strength.

ANALGESIA

You will be discharged with oral analgesia to help with any pain you might experience.

It is recommended that you have a stronger pain killer the first evening, but from then on, icing, elevation and simple paracetamol and anti-inflammatories will often be adequate.

Do not take the strong analgesics if you are not in a lot of pain.

If you require more than what has been supplied upon discharge then please attend to you GP for further prescriptions.

If you develop uncontrolled pain, or become unwell, then please contact Mr Richardson's rooms for more advice.

PHYSIOTHERAPY

Physiotherapy rehabilitation is an essential part of the recovery following ACL surgery. You will be given exercises to follow when you leave hospital. You should make an appointment with your physio to coincide to follow the review appointment with Mr Richardson. If you do not have a physiotherapist, Mr Richardson will refer you to one.