

## Knee Arthroscopy

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Arthroscopy is a procedure that allows the doctor to inspect the inside of your knee with an arthroscope, which is a thin fiber optic scope. Surgery is performed with special instruments requiring only very small incisions while viewing through the scope. Remember, even though the incisions are small, surgery has been performed inside the knee joint. And though you may have the same incisions as another patient, you may have had a completely different injury and therefore a different operation and will have a different recovery plan. Therefore, your recovery instruction will be tailored to your needs not someone else's needs.

As with any arthroscopic surgery you should expect some mild post-operative discomfort that is typically a lot less than a more classic open surgery. There will be a local anesthetic in your knee after surgery and medication will be ordered to provide additional pain relief as needed. Don't forget to take your pain medications the first day. They will help your recovery even if your knee feels "fine" right after the surgery. The local anesthesia will wear off and it is nice to have taken pain meds before it does. Taking the pain medications after the local wears off is always less effective.



You will be able to leave the hospital after you recover from anesthesia. You will need someone to drive you home from the hospital. Ice and elevation is important post op to keep the swelling down. Remember a less swollen knee is more comfortable and recovers more quickly. You may find crutch walking more comfortable for the first few weeks after surgery. Physical therapy will start three days after surgery, in most cases. You will be given a prescription at the time of your pre-op exam with Dr. Reznik.



The following are tips to help you be ready for your surgery:

**Workman's Compensation patients only:** If your injury is covered by Worker's Compensation, we must have written approval for your surgery. Please confirm this with Dr. Reznik's secretary before you do the following:

**All patients** are required to have current bloodwork and a urinalysis done within 30 days prior to surgery. Our secretary will mail you the necessary requisition form to bring to the lab with you.

You may need to schedule a pre-op exam. In general, patients over age 50 or any patient with medical concerns need a physical exam with your primary care physician within 30 days of your surgery date. This may include a chest x-ray and EKG prior to surgery. Please check with Dr. Reznik or his nurse to see if this is required.

If a pre-op exam is needed and scheduled with your Primary Care Physician, please call Dr. Reznik's secretary, Theresa, at (203) 865-6784 ext. 327 to let her know the date and time of this appointment. She will then fax over the necessary paperwork to your Primary Care Physician, who will need to complete and return the paperwork to our office.

Our secretary will also give you your appointments for both your pre-op and post-op visits with Dr. Reznik. Your pre-op appointment with Dr. Reznik is usually scheduled for approximately one week prior to surgery. It is during this visit that Dr. Reznik will answer any questions you may have regarding your procedure and give you all the prescriptions you need following your surgery.

It is okay to fill your prescriptions prior to your surgery, **BUT DO NOT START TAKING THEM UNTIL AFTER YOUR SURGERY.** Your post-op visit will be scheduled for seven to ten days following your surgery.

Physical Therapy usually starts three or four days post-op unless otherwise indicated. You will also receive a prescription for this at your pre-op visit. Please be sure to schedule the first three to four therapy appointments while you are in the office for your pre-op appointment.

## **Pre-Operative Planning**

Inform your family and friends about your upcoming surgery, should you need help during your recovery.

Plan and freeze meals in advance for your recovery time. Move scatter rugs out of walking areas to avoid tripping.

Have ice bags available. Gel ice packs work well also. A large bag of frozen peas or corn wrapped in a towel works well.



Have pillows available to elevate your leg as needed. Have appropriate footwear (Sneakers or comfortably fitting shoes).

Stop taking Herbal supplements, Aspirin and aspirin-like drugs such as: Advil, Motrin, Aleve, Daypro or Naprosyn, 7-10 days prior to surgery. \*See our list of "medications to avoid 10 days prior to surgery"

## **The Day of Surgery**

Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before surgery!! You may brush your teeth, provided you do not swallow ANY water. Remove all jewelry. Remove nail polish.

Have someone to drive you to and from the hospital. You will not be allowed to drive yourself home from your surgery.

Get your prescriptions filled before your surgery day but do not start to take until after your surgery.

Put crutches in the car.

Wear loose fitting, comfortable clothes to the hospital.

If you wear contact lenses, remove them and wear glasses to the hospital.

## **Post-Operative Instructions**

**Medications:** Take your medications as prescribed after surgery. If you have questions regarding your medication, please call Dr. Reznik's office at (203)-865-6784.

**Fluids:** Drink plenty of fluids while you are taking pain medication as it can cause constipation; Increasing your fluid intake will help prevent this problem.

**Dressing/Showering:** The dressing is to remain clean and dry. After many arthroscopic procedures, you may remove the dressings and any small yellow Xeroform strips and shower after 48 hours. If little white tapes or "steri-strips" are on the incisions, leave them on and keep them dry, these will be removed along with any stitches you may have, at your first post-op visit. After a shower, pat the incisions dry, don't rub the scabs off. Cover each incision with a plan Band-Aid. Do not use creams or ointments on the incisions.

With some arthroscopic procedures, your 1 st dressing change will be at your first physical therapy appointment by the therapist and you may shower after that. Please check with Dr Reznik or his nurse to be sure when you should change your dressing and shower.



**Ice:** Use ice bags for 24-48 hours post-op to reduce pain and swelling. Alternate ice bag 20 minutes on and 10 minutes off. Always wrap ice in a towel or cloth, never place ice bag directly on skin as this can cause frostbite.

**Elevation:** When resting in bed after surgery place 2-3 pillows under effected leg and elevate slightly above heart level, this will help reduce swelling.

**Blood Clots:** Patients at high risk for blood clots include:

- Those with long car or train commutes
- May be overweight (\*BMI>30)
- Have a history of having cancer
- Females on birth control pills
- Males over the age of 40

These patients should be taking 1 aspirin per day for 6 weeks after surgery unless allergic to aspirin.

\*BMI or body mass index is a number calculated from a person's weight and height. BMI provides a reliable indicator of body composition. The index is used to screen for weight categories that may lead to health problems: <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/bmi/>

**Stop smoking:** Smoking slows the healing process by interfering with the making of new DNA. Smoking also increases the risk of infection and pneumonia after surgery by slowing your body's white blood cells.

**Deep Breathing:** Be sure to regularly take a deep breath and blow it out. This helps to clear the lungs after anesthesia. Call Dr. Reznik immediately if you develop a fever, experience stomach upset, or notice excessive redness, warmth, or swelling at surgical site or if you have excessive bleeding or odorous drainage from surgical site.

**Driving:** You may not resume driving until you are off all pain meds, can place full weight on the leg without pain and are seen by the physician.

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