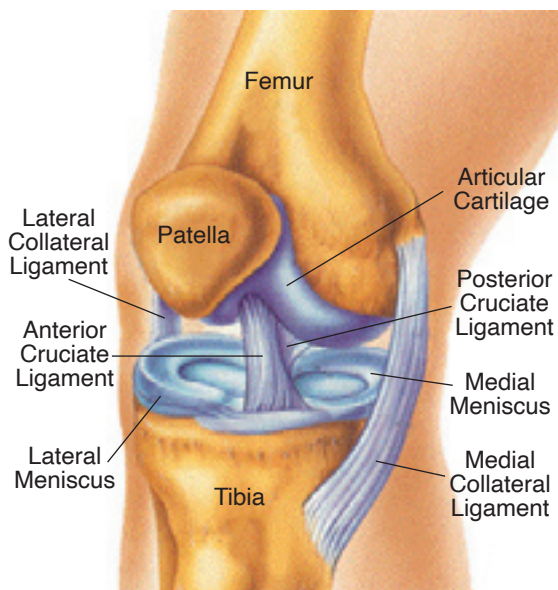


# Knee Arthroscopy Surgery



## When is it Time to Think About Surgery?

You may need knee arthroscopy surgery if you are experiencing knee pain, limited motion, or instability of your knee. These symptoms may be caused by ligament or cartilage tears inside the knee resulting from injury or wear-and-tear on the joint. You may also be experiencing knee joint pain, clicking, snapping, swelling, or decreased motion in your knee.

## About the Surgery

Knee arthroscopy surgery involves the doctor making a few small incisions around the knee after using general anesthesia to put you to sleep. The doctor can see the inner tissues of the knee on a television monitor. Many problems can be diagnosed and corrected once the arthroscope is in place.

This procedure will take approximately a half hour for the doctor to perform. You will wake up in recovery with a bulky knee wrap and an IV. Once you are

awake and taking fluids, the IV will be removed and you will be allowed to go home. You will be weight bearing as tolerated and may use crutches/walker initially for support.

## Preparing for Surgery

Lab work and EKG may be scheduled prior to surgery.

Anti-inflammatory medications, aspirin, and blood-thinning medications should be discontinued one week before your surgery. These medications affect your blood clotting factors and could increase your risk for bleeding.

## What to Expect After Surgery

You may walk on the knee when you are comfortable, and you should expect your knee to be swollen and weak when you first walk on it. You may also begin to bend the knee as tolerated. You should be comfortable and may be off your walking aide unless otherwise instructed by your doctor within 3 days. The bulky dressing on your knee will be removed the morning after surgery and should not be replaced.

## Complications and Risks of Surgery

**Blood clots:** Symptoms of clotting include pain, swelling, or redness of your calf or thigh. Call the office immediately if you develop any of these symptoms or go to the emergency room if it is a weekend. Go to the nearest emergency room or call 911 if you have sudden and severe shortness of breath.

**Infection:** Infection is rare, but can occur following surgery. You are at a higher risk for infection if you have diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, chronic liver or kidney disease, or if you are taking steroids. Symptoms include fever

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or chills, drainage, redness, a foul smell or increased pain at the incision sites. Call the office immediately if any of these symptoms occur.

**Anesthesia complications:** Respiratory failure, shock, cardiac arrest, and death are always possible during surgery. Patients with long-term kidney, heart, liver, or lung disease are at a higher risk. Nausea and vomiting from the anesthesia are also common. Coughing, deep breathing and drinking fluids will help flush out the anesthesia gases.

**Nerve damage:** Damage to your surrounding knee nerves is rare but can occur. Notify your doctor if numbness or tingling around the knee joint is prolonged or worsens after surgery.

**Bleeding inside the joint:** Trauma to arteries or veins surrounding the knee is rare, but may occur. It is common for some bruising and discoloration to appear around the knee after surgery. Bright red blood drainage from the scope sites is not common and the doctor should be notified if this occurs.

## Recovery Period

The average recovery period for knee arthroscopy surgery is about 2-3 weeks depending on the specific type of procedure you've had done. Most patients are back to work within a few days if their job is sedentary, and 3 weeks if they have a labor-intensive job. Activities like walking and biking are encouraged to promote knee strength and overall fitness.

You are expected to do the exercises provided in this pamphlet. Physical therapy may be ordered if you lack normal range of motion in your knee.

## Knee Arthroscopy Post-Op Instructions

1. Elevate your knee above your heart and apply ice for the first 48 hours to decrease swelling and facilitate the healing of your knee.
2. Pump the ankle of the affected leg at least 3 - 4 times every hour to improve circulation and prevent blood clots. Walk every hour during the day.
3. Continue to do your instructed exercises at home until you are seen by your doctor.

4. Gradually begin to put weight on the affected leg. Once you can walk without pain or swelling, you do not need to use crutches unless advised by your doctor. If you experience increased pain or swelling, continue to use the crutches until you are evaluated in the office.
5. You may loosen the bulky dressing so that it is comfortable after you get home. You may remove the dressing completely 24 hours after surgery. You may shower, but do not take a bath or go in a pool or hot tub. Do not apply lotion or Neosporin to your incision. Your sutures will be removed at your post-op visit 7 - 10 days after surgery.
6. Please call your doctor's office the day after surgery to schedule your post-op visit.

## Knee Arthroscopy Post-Op Exercises

1. **Quadriceps sets:** Lie down on your back and tighten your thigh muscle by pressing your knee toward the floor. Hold for 5 - 10 seconds. Relax and repeat 10 times. Do 6 sets each day.
2. **Straight-leg raises:** Lie down on your back and lift your leg 8 - 12 inches. Hold for 4 - 6 seconds and slowly lower your leg. Relax and repeat 10 times. Do 6 sets each day.
3. **Ankle range of motion:** Slowly rotate your foot 360°, making each circle as large as you can. Repeat 3 - 4 times. Do 6 sets each day.
4. **Heel slides:** Lie on your back and bend your knee slightly. Slowly slide your heel along the floor toward your buttocks and slide your heel as far as you can. Hold for 5 seconds and repeat.

Please follow and do these exercises daily until you are instructed to discontinue them. These exercises will help build your upper leg muscles and speed your recovery.