

**Thomas Peatman, MD**  
**Webster Orthopedic Medical Group**  
**Appointments (800) 943- 8099**  
**Erica (510) 267-4018**

**Discharge Instructions for ACL Reconstruction:**

1. Take pain medication as prescribed. Medication is most effective at the onset of pain, before it gets severe. Wean to Tylenol or Advil as tolerated.
2. Expect leg swelling. Ice and elevation are the solution: Apply cold therapy using polar care held on your knee with an ace bandage. A gel ice pad is similar. Always have a cloth between the skin and ice pad, to prevent an “ice burn”.
3. Start gentle motion, emphasizing “complete” knee extension. With both feet on a chair in front of you, your knees should be at the same level. If your operative knee is higher, the leg is not straight.
4. You will be receiving a CPM machine at your home to help move your knee after surgery. Begin using the CPM machine from 0-110 degrees as you are able to tolerate 3-4 times per day, 30-60 minutes per session. Start with a setting that is comfortable, then increase 5 degrees. Allow your muscles to adapt to this setting for a few minutes, then increase again. When an increase does not become easy in a few minutes, you are at the max for this session, leave it there. The next time you start the CPM, you will have to again start lower and work your way up.
5. Keep all wounds clean and dry. Leave your dressing in place for 48 hours after your surgery. Then you may shower (no bath or hot tub). You may replace dressings with clean dry gauze after 48 hours, or leave them open if there is no fluid coming out. Leave the white tape Steri-Strips in place (they will not fall off). If you like the feel of the ACE wrap, you may continue to use one.
6. The knee brace placed at the time of surgery may be removed for using the CPM and for gentle knee motion 3-4 times per day. The knee brace should be used in the locked straight position at all times when you are putting weight on the knee.
7. You may bear weight through your leg using crutches and the knee brace as you are able to tolerate. Discard the crutches when you are comfortable with the brace alone.
8. Make a follow up appointment if one has not been scheduled with Dr. Peatman or Sarah for 7-10 days after surgery.
9. Call Dr. Peatman’s office promptly (510-267-4018) for any of the following:
  - \*Bright red or persistent bleeding soaking through all dressings
  - \*Unrelieved pain (not responding to ice and pain meds as scheduled)
  - \*Persistent nausea or vomiting
  - \*Temperature above 101 degrees F. Check with a thermometer
  - \*Difficulty breathing
  - \*Spreading redness and increasing pain around the incision
  - \*Numbness or tingling in the extremity which is not resolving

Resume eating with small meals of light food or soups. Encourage fluid intake. Avoid heavy or greasy food for 24 hours. You may benefit from taking Metamucil or fiber to avoid the constipation from narcotics.

Do not drive while taking narcotics. Do not drive until you have adequate control of the leg.

Do not drink alcohol while taking narcotics.