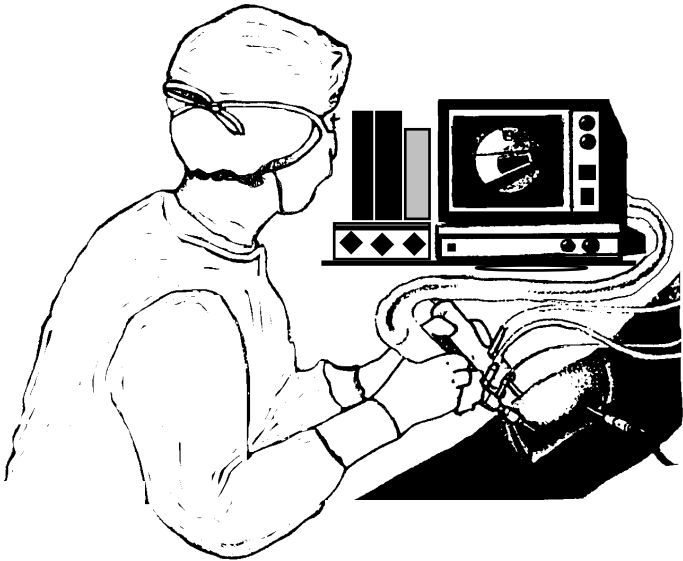
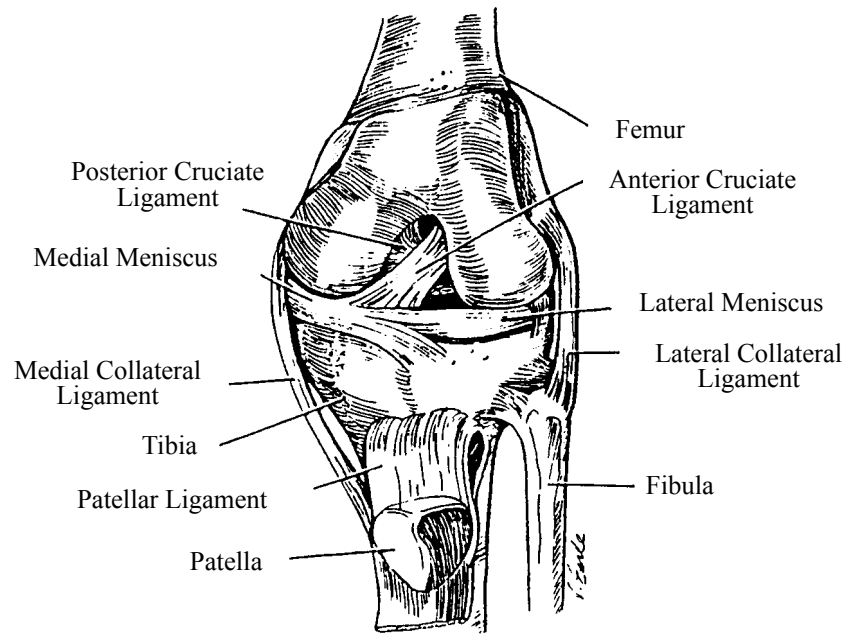


# Arthroscopy of the Knee

## Discharge Instructions



UBC Hospital  
2211 Wesbrook Mall  
Vancouver BC V6T 2B5  
Tel.604-822-7121



**Anatomy of the Left Knee**

## General Information

This procedure is done in the operating room under a general or spinal anaesthetic. A lighted telescopic lens called an arthroscope is used to directly view the inside of the knee joint. This procedure is done to examine the joint and do minor surgical procedures (i.e. cleaning the joint surfaces, removing pieces of bone, tissue, cartilage, staples or screws). A few puncture wounds are made in the knee in order to place the arthroscope and instruments.

The procedure takes between 30 minutes to 1 hour.

## Important Points in Treatment

### Swelling

Your knee will be swollen and somewhat uncomfortable for 24 to 48 hours after your operation. This is normal and partly due to the fact that some fluid is injected into the knee during the procedure. The sensation of splashing of fluid in the knee is normal and will gradually disappear.

If you have pain and/or swelling, apply an ice pack over the knee bandage for 10-20 minutes every 2-3 hours as needed. Elevate the leg to decrease swelling.

### Bandage

Your knee may have a bandage consisting of gauze covering the incisions, padding and an elastic wrap (tensor). If the bandage feels too tight and especially if you feel tingling or numbness in the foot, REWRAP the tensor (not as tightly) starting at mid calf to above the knee.

You may remove the gauze and padding in 2 days unless otherwise instructed

Continue to use your tensor until seen by your physician. Do not disturb the tapes/stitches. If the tapes get wet or fall off, replace with a bandaid on your wound until seen by your doctor.

If you have a tensor (elastic bandage) on your knee, it should be removed and rewrapped twice a day to improve your circulation.

*If you had surgery for dislocating patella (kneecap), please do not disturb the dressing and tensor (elastic bandage) until you are seen in the doctor's office, unless otherwise instructed.*

## Bathing

You may shower and bathe after the dressing has been removed. DO NOT soak the limb in water until discussed with your doctor.

## Medication

Take medications as prescribed.

## Activity/Exercise

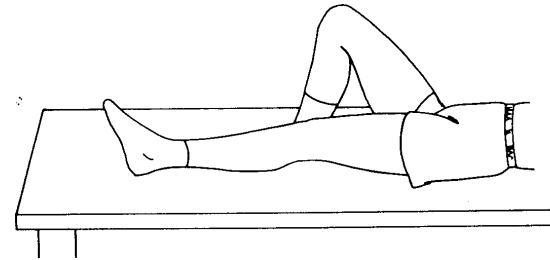
Unless otherwise instructed, you may undertake activity as you wish, as long as it does not cause undue pain or discomfort. Crutches are optional and you may bear full weight, unless your doctor orders otherwise. Post-operative exercises are outlined on the next page, and should start the day of your operation.

If you have difficulty understanding or doing these exercises,

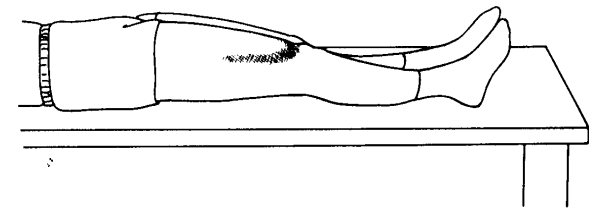
contact the physiotherapist that you will be seeing for your knee rehabilitation program or contact your surgeon.

1. Lie flat on your back with the operative knee held straight and the other knee bent, tighten your thigh muscles by these two exercises:

- (a) elevating the operative leg off the bed and holding it in this position for a few seconds.

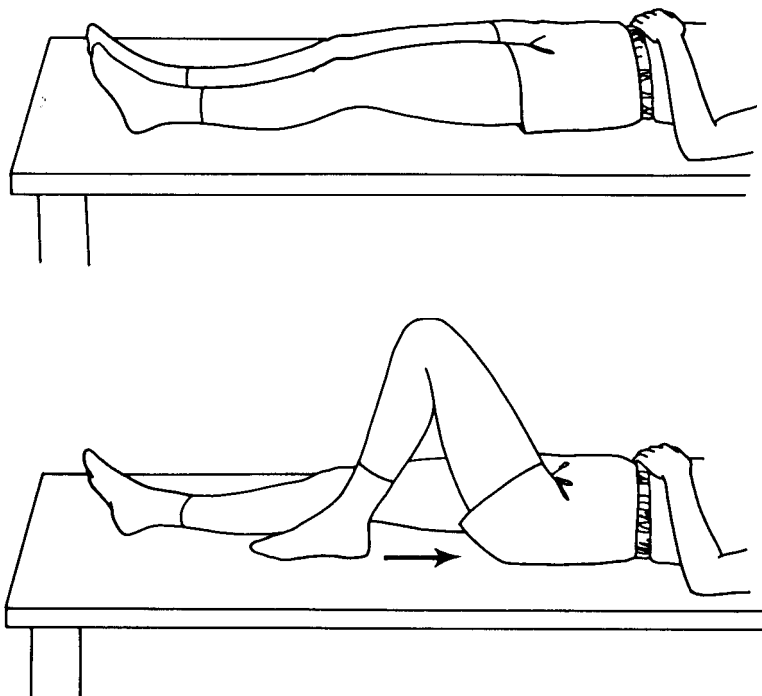


- (b) pressing your operative leg and heel firmly into the bed or floor, thus tightening the muscles at the front of your thigh for a few seconds.



Begin at a level you find comfortable and gradually work up to 50-60 of each of the above exercises four times per day.

2. Gradually begin bending your knee progressing at a rate you find comfortable until you can fully bend the knee.



### Follow-Up Appointment

Ensure you keep appointments for follow-up care with your doctor. Contact your doctor's office to arrange for an appointment.

## Notify the Doctor or go to the Emergency Department if any of the following happens

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- you notice any signs of circulation problems (numbness, coolness, change in skin colour, calf pain, difficulty moving toes/ankle up and down) which is not relieved by loosening the bandage and tensor and/or elevating the leg
- the knee becomes red, swollen, warm to touch and/or you notice pus-like (yellow or green) discharge
- persistent bleeding continues even after applying direct pressure to the area for 10-15 minutes
- you develop chills or fever (38.5°C/101.3°F or higher)
- you experience pain unrelieved by your prescribed medication
- you have (unusual for you) shortness of breath or chest pain

Besides these general instructions remember also:

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