ACL Reconstruction – post op handout

Following your knee ACL reconstruction you will have arthroscopic incisions which have been made to harvest the graft and to reconstruct the knee. The ACL reconstruction will take a long time to heal. It will take about 2 months for the tendon graft to heal to the bone. It is very important to that you take it easy for this period and follow the post operative program.

A physiotherapist will give you crutches and exercises to commence following surgery. The day following surgery, your dressings will be reduced and drains removed. Patients are normally discharged following 1 nights stay in hospital.

The post operative program initially consists of controlling the pain and swelling of the knee. Rehabilitation aims at regaining normal range of motion, maintaining muscle strength and finally specific exercises to regain coordination and function of the knee.

Keep dressing intact for 1 week. The outer bandage may be re-tightened if it becomes loose.
Icing the knee for 30 minutes 3 times a day will help with swelling and discomfort. Gel packs, ice packs or a plastic bag of ice wrapped in moist towels will all work well.

In the first few days you may notice sloshing or gurgling in the knee which is normal and no cause for alarm.

Please phone 9381 3084 to schedule a post operative appointment 10 days following surgery.

EXERCISE

Gentle swimming and exercise bike riding (no resistance) may be started 3 – 4 weeks following surgery. After 2 months these exercises can be gradually increased. Running not before 4 months and return to sport not before 9 months.

IF YOU DEVELOP A TEMPERATURE OF OVER 38.5°
SWELLING OR DISCOMFORT WHICH PERSISTS
OR WORSENS DESPITE REST, ICE, ELEVATION AND PAIN MEDICINE
IF YOU EXPERIENCE EXCESSIVE BLEEDING, NUMBNESS,
TINGLING, REDNESS OR SWELLING IN THE LEG

PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE OR THE HOSPITAL