Knee Arthroscopy – post op handout

Knee arthroscopy is performed through small arthroscopic portals which require stitches. The bandage covering you knee is not waterproof and care needs to be taken to keep your surgical site dry.

Despite the fact that only small incisions were required for your surgery the amount of surgery performed was the same as if a full open operation had been performed.

A physiotherapist may see you in hospital and instruct you on exercises to continue with following your discharge from hospital. Occasionally you may require further follow up following post operative review.

You may leave the hospital when you are fully awake though you may choose to stay in hospital overnight if you live by yourself or feel unwell following your operation.

NOTES FOR HOME:

1. You may use the knee freely but try not to overdo it in the early post operative period. Be guided by the amount of pain and swelling you are experiencing in your knee.

2. Keep the dressing on for about 1 week. A post-operative appointment should be made 1 week following surgery.

KNEE SWELLING:

This is inevitable after any knee surgery, even if performed through an arthroscope. Naturally it is less than it would be after an open operation, but it does still occur.

Your swelling can be controlled by:

1. Elevating the knee as much as possible and not overdoing it in the early postoperative period.

2. Continuing to wear a firm bandage or elastic support until the swelling has reduced.

3. Icing the knee for 20 minutes 3 times a day. Gel packs, ice packs or a plastic bag of ice wrapped in moist towels will all work effectively.

4. Using anti-inflammatory medication. If this is considered necessary it will prescribed for you.

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