

## **Total Knee Replacement First Post-Operative Visit**

**Sutures:** Staples will generally be removed at this visit if the wound is healing well. In some circumstances, staples will be left in for an additional week. After staples are removed you may continue to shower daily without any bandage needed. Small steri-strips on the wound should be removed in 1 week. If any fall off, the steri-stripes do not need to be replaced before 1 week is over. When showering, let soap and water run over the incision (do not scrub). Do not submerge the incision in a pool or bathtub for another 3 weeks. The incision should no longer have any drainage after the staples are removed; a bandage is NO longer necessary. If any wound drainage develops, please call us immediately.

**Pain Medication:** Most patients require some pain medication for up to 6 weeks after surgery, particularly for physical therapy and perhaps to help with sleeping. We will be happy to provide refills during this time if necessary. Now is an appropriate time to start decreasing the amount of medicine you are taking. Tylenol can be substituted for the narcotic. Do not exceed 3000mg of Tylenol in 24 hours and remember that the pain medication may contain some Tylenol – this must be considered when calculating the total dose. In general, do not exceed 10 pills of pain medicine or Tylenol, or any combination of the two, in 24 hours. Do not use anti-inflammatory medications (Motrin, Advil, Aleve, etc.) other than prescriptions we give you while taking aspirin for DVT prophylaxis without discussing this with us. Medication refills must be requested during business hours (8am-4:30pm) and at least 24-48 hours before the prescription runs out. The best way to request a refill for medication is through Mychart or via phone if needed at (410) 674-1641.

**Physical Activity:** Unless you have been given special precautions, you may bear weight as tolerated and should continue with your home exercise program two times a day. Physical therapy is an important component of your recovery and should be continued three times a week. You may start to use cane, and then no assistive devices, under the supervision of your physical therapist. Range of motion exercises are **CRUCIAL** now. **DO NOT** sleep with any pillows or rolls under the knee – this will encourage stiffness.

**DVT prevention (Aspirin):** Continue Aspirin 325mg two times a day for 6 weeks after surgery. TED stockings may be discontinued 4 weeks after surgery, although you may wear them longer if you like, particularly if you have some leg swelling. For patients requiring additional forms of anti-coagulation, specific instructions will be provided for that medication. Please call if there are any questions. In general, if you are on eliquis after surgery, this will be stopped 4 weeks after the surgery, and then you should begin taking ecotrin 81mg twice a day for 2 additional weeks.

**General Notes:** Many patients will feel some fatigue, have trouble sleeping, and report some leg swelling after joint replacement surgery. This is normal and should resolve over the next few weeks. If you have problems or concerns at any time, please do not hesitate to contact us at the office. For emergencies after hours, a physician is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and can be reached at (410)-268-8862.