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ACL Reconstruction - Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: How long will the surgery take?

A: The surgery will take about 1-2 hours, but expect to be away from your loved ones longer as it takes time to go to sleep, position you for surgery, and give you time to wake up and become alert in the recover area.

Q: Will I need a ride to and from the hospital?

A: Yes. Please coordinate this prior to your scheduled surgery date. Ride sharing (Uber and Lyft) are unfortunately not acceptable/safe to take you home after surgery.

Q: What time will my surgery be?

A: You will get a call from a nurse at the surgery center/hospital within the week prior to your scheduled surgery date to let you know what time your surgery is and exactly when to arrive at the facility.

Q: Will I need to stay in the hospital overnight?

A: No. This is an outpatient procedure.

Q: Do I need to stop my Advil/Aleve/Aspirin prior to my surgery?

A: Yes. Please stop these medications 5-7 days prior to procedure. It is OK to take Tylenol for pain control up to the day of surgery.

Q: What if I am on a blood thinner medication?

A: Please coordinate with your prescribing provider a plan for your blood thinner medication for before/after surgery prior to your scheduled surgery date.

Q: Will I need to take any antibiotics after the surgery?

A: We will give you a dose of antibiotics through your IV about 1 hour prior to your procedure. You will not go home with a prescription for antibiotics. Please notify the surgical team if you have an antibiotic allergy.

Q: What medication will I go home with after surgery?

A: You will be prescribed 3 medications. (1) Oxycodone 5mg is a short acting narcotic pain medication that will help with post-operative pain. (2) Zofran 4mg is an anti-nausea medication that will help with nausea associated with the pain medication. (3) Naprosyn 500mg is an anti-inflammatory that will help with pain and inflammation for 5 days post-op. We also recommend you take something for constipation as this is a very common side effect of Oxycodone.

Q: What if I am on chronic pain medication?

A: We do not manage chronic pain medication. Please set up a plan with your prescribing provider PRIOR to your scheduled surgery date to help manage post-operative pain. We are happy to help execute this plan for both your safety and adequate pain control.

Q: Will I be offered anything else for pain management after surgery?

A: Yes. The anesthesiologist will offer you a nerve block to help with post-operative pain. This can provide relief for about 12-24 hours after surgery. In addition, ice will help with pain and swelling after surgery.

Q: What are the risks associated with surgery?

A: As with all surgery, there are risks of anesthesia complications, infection, damage to nerves and/or vessels, fracture, failure of the repair and need for further surgery. These risks are thankfully exceedingly low.

Q: Do I need to be in a brace after surgery?

A: You will leave the operating room with a brace on your knee. If you DO NOT have a meniscus repair, this brace will remain on until you are seen by your physical therapist. You can unlock it once the nerve block wears off. IF YOU HAVE YOUR MENISCUS REPAIRED (Not Menisectomy), you will be in the brace for 6 weeks and it will limit your motion from 0-90 degrees. This will be set up prior to you going home.

Q: How long will I be on crutches after surgery?

A: After your ACL procedure, expect to be weight bearing as tolerated and needing crutches for about 7-14 days. However, if you have your meniscus REPAIRED (Not Menisectomy), you will be on crutches for 4 weeks.

Q: Will I have any implants in my knee?

A: Yes. If you choose to use a patellar tendon/BTB (bone-tendon-bone) graft, you will have 2 titanium screws in your knee. If you decide to use a hamstring graft, you will have a high density plastic screw and titanium button. It is uncommon to need these implants removed in the future.

Q: When does physical therapy start?

A: Physical therapy will start 3-5 days after surgery. You will go about 1-2 times per week. Please set up your post-op PT prior to your scheduled surgery date.

Q: Will I have to come see you again after surgery?

A: Yes. You will have 5 post-op appointment set up. (1st) 7-14 days out, (2nd) 6 weeks out, (3rd) 3 months out, (4th) 6 months out, (5th) 9 months out.

Q: When will I be allowed to shower?

A: You can shower after 48 hours. At that point it will be OK to remove your dressings; however, please leave the steri-strips (small band-aid like strips) on. You can let the soap and water run over the incisions but do not scrub it and do not soak it. After the shower, pat your knee dry and reapply the ACE wrap and compression stocking for swelling control.

Q: Can I drive while in a brace?

A: You cannot drive while taking pain medication. Once off pain medication, it usually takes about 2 weeks to develop the quad strength needed to drive.

Q: When can I go back to work?

A: It depends on what your job is. If it involves you mainly sitting throughout the day, most patients will go back to work around 1 week post-op. If you are on your feet throughout the day, expect this to be longer. The surgical team can provide you with a letter explaining your absence and/or restrictions if needed..

Q: Will I need to get another X-Ray or MRI after surgery to make sure my graft is healed?

A: No. We do not routinely get any imaging after surgery.

For more information about your upcoming procedure, please visit our website: www.sportsandshoulderdoc.com