

# Post-Operative Instructions: Knee Surgery

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## Weight Bearing & Crutch Use

Your weight bearing status will depend on the specific procedure performed:

- **ACL Reconstruction (without Meniscus Repair):**  
You are encouraged to **weight bear as tolerated** immediately after surgery.  
Use crutches for support, but you may discontinue them **as soon as you feel stable and comfortable**.
  - **Meniscus Repair, Osteotomy, or PCL Reconstruction:**  
You will need to **limit weight bearing** and use crutches.  
Remain non-weight bearing or partial weight bearing **until cleared by Dr. Gazzaniga**.
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## Brace Use

- **Meniscus Repair:**  
Your knee brace will be **locked in extension**.  
Do **not** unlock or remove the brace unless specifically instructed.
  - **ACL Reconstruction (without Meniscus Repair):**  
Your brace will be **unlocked** and may be removed at night for sleep.  
You may **discontinue use as soon as possible**.  
*Note:* While some physical therapists recommend prolonged brace use, Dr. Gazzaniga encourages early brace removal to promote **quadriceps activation and prevent atrophy**.
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## Dressing & Wound Care

- **Keep your surgical dressing in place until your follow-up appointment**, unless you are specifically instructed otherwise.
  - Keep the area **clean and dry**. Do not remove steri-strips or bandages unless advised.
  - Do **not soak the knee** (baths, pools, hot tubs) until cleared by your doctor.
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# DAVID S. GAZZANIGA, MD

## *Sports Medicine*

### Pain Control

- Take **ibuprofen and acetaminophen together** on a regular, around-the-clock schedule:
    - **Ibuprofen:** \_\_\_\_\_ mg every 6–8 hours
    - **Acetaminophen:** \_\_\_\_\_ mg every 8 hours
  - A muscle relaxer may also be prescribed. Use as directed for muscle tightness or spasms.
  - Narcotic medication (if prescribed) should be taken only as needed and tapered off as soon as possible.
  - Apply **ice to the knee regularly (20 minutes every 2 hours while awake)** to help reduce pain and swelling.
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### Activity & Physical Therapy

- Begin moving your ankle and toes immediately to promote circulation.
  - A physical therapy plan will be provided. Early quad activation is essential to recovery.
  - Avoid prolonged sitting or standing without elevating the leg.
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### When to Call the Office

Contact us if you experience:

- Fever >101.5°F (38.6°C)
  - Excessive swelling, redness, or drainage from the incision
  - Calf pain or difficulty breathing
  - Numbness or inability to move toes
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### Follow-Up Appointment

Your first post-operative visit is scheduled for:

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_