



## Dr Jonathan Herald

Shoulder, Elbow, Knee Surgeon  
MBBS, FRACS (Orth), FAOrthA



Orthoclinic  
Orthopaedic Clinic Sydney

P: (02) 9233 3946

F: (02) 9009 0663

E: [info@orthoclinic.com.au](mailto:info@orthoclinic.com.au)

# Post-Op Care Instructions and Exercises for Knee Arthroscopy

## POST OPERATIVE CARE

- Mobility:** You may put full weight on your leg, however you may be limited by pain. If you need crutches they are available from the hospital.
- Dressings:** Keep the outer bandage on for 1 to 2 days if it stays dry and clean. After this you can remove it. To keep the outer bandage dry please shower with a plastic bag. Once removed the underneath dressings are waterproof but if soiled see me or your GP to get them changed as soon as possible.
- Sutures:** You will have buried, dissolving skin sutures that do not need to be removed.
- Analgesia:** A prescription has been provided by either myself, my assistant or my anaesthetist for analgesics. Please be aware that codeine containing products such as Panadeine Forte may cause constipation and drowsiness and should be used sparingly and with a high fibre diet e.g. Metamucil.
- Rehabilitation:** Post-operative physiotherapy and home exercises are very important after surgery. Please follow the instructions shown later. You will be referred to formal physiotherapy immediately after surgery. Please take your surgical booklet with you.
- Follow-up:** You will also need to contact Orthopaedic Clinic Sydney on 02 9233 3946 to arrange a follow-up appointment to see me at around 10 to 14 days. If it is not possible to see me, please see your GP at this time.
- Driving a car:** You are not allowed to drive a car home after today's procedure. It will take around 2 weeks for you to regain knee control to be safe to drive a car.

### When to Worry:

- If you think you have an infection,
- Abnormal bleeding, a wound problem,
- A bandage that is too tight and cutting off your circulation,
- New numbness and tingling or any other emergency please contact the rooms immediately or failing that go back to hospital or see your GP.



**Dr Jonathan Herald**

Shoulder, Elbow, Knee Surgeon  
MBBS, FRACS (Orth), FAOrthA



**Orthoclinic**  
Orthopaedic Clinic Sydney

P: (02) 9233 3946

F: (02) 9009 0663

E: info@orthoclinic.com.au

## After Your Arthroscopy

You'll spend a brief time in recovery following arthroscopy. Once you're home, take it easy. Since arthroscopy needs only small incisions, you can expect less scarring and pain and often a quicker recovery than after open surgery.

### In the Recovery Room

After arthroscopy, expect to have your knee bandaged and elevated. An ice pack is put on to help reduce pain and swelling. Pain medication may be given either orally or through an IV (**intravenous**) line. A nurse will monitor your temperature, blood pressure, and heartbeat. When you're awake and alert, the nurse will help you get ready to go home.



**The incisions** will be stitched, stapled, or taped. Your knee will be bandaged.

**Move your feet** in the recovery room to improve circulation and help prevent blood clots.

### Going Home

You may be able to go home two or three hours after arthroscopy. Because the anesthetic and pain medication may make you sleepy, you'll need to arrange ahead of time to have someone drive you home. Before leaving, make sure you have any prescriptions or home care instructions you'll need until your first follow-up visit with your surgeon.



**Wear a skirt or loose pants** that will fit comfortably over your bandaged knee.

### Using Crutches

When you first stand on your leg, your knee may throb or hurt. To reduce the weight on your operated leg and limit discomfort, your surgeon may suggest you use crutches. If possible, try out your crutches beforehand, so walking will be easier the day of arthroscopy.





**Dr Jonathan Herald**

Shoulder, Elbow, Knee Surgeon  
MBBS, FRACS (Orth), FAOrthA



**Orthoclinic**  
Orthopaedic Clinic Sydney

P: (02) 9233 3946

F: (02) 9009 0663

E: info@orthoclinic.com.au

## After Your Arthroscopy

### Your Home Recovery

At home, elevate your knee, exercise, and follow your surgeon's instructions. To check your progress, your surgeon may see you one or two times during the first few weeks after arthroscopy. **Call your surgeon if you have bleeding, pain uncontrolled by pain medication, fever, numbness, or shortness of breath.**

### Relieving Pain

Don't dangle your leg for long periods. Elevate your knee above heart level to reduce swelling and pain. Ice and rest can also help. During the first two days after arthroscopy, ice your knee for 20 to 30 minutes a few times a day. Straighten your knee several times a day while you heal.

### Showering

Wait to take your first shower until you are able to stand comfortably for 10 to 15 minutes. Cover your leg with plastic to avoid getting your bandage and incisions wet, which increases your chance of infection.



**Cover your leg** with a plastic bag tied above your dressing.



### Exercising

Building up the muscles that support your knee and improving joint mobility are the best ways to speed recovery. Your surgeon may have you try limited walking and do each of the exercises at right several times a day. Use slow, steady movements and always exercise both legs to keep your muscles balanced. Ask about low-impact exercises like swimming or bicycling.

#### Quadriceps sets



**Tighten your front thigh muscles (quadriceps)**, pressing your knee toward the floor. Hold for 5 to 10 seconds; then relax.

#### Straight leg raises



**Lift your leg 8 to 12 inches**, keeping your knee straight. Hold for 5 seconds. Lower your leg slowly back to the ground.

#### Heel slides



**Bend your knee** and slide your heel toward your hip as far as you can. Hold for 5 seconds. Slide back down until your knee touches the floor.

### Using Physical Therapy

Depending on your needs, your surgeon may refer you to a **physical therapist**, a specialist in the rehabilitation of joints. A physical therapist can design a personalized exercise program to help improve your muscle strength and joint function.





**Dr Jonathan Herald**

Shoulder, Elbow, Knee Surgeon  
MBBS, FRACS (Orth), FAOrthA



**Orthoclinic**  
Orthopaedic Clinic Sydney

P: (02) 9233 3946

F: (02) 9009 0663

E: info@orthoclinic.com.au

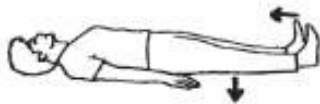
## Personal Exercise Program



Move your ankles up/down  
Repeat 10 times.



Lying on your back with one leg straight.  
Ensure you have a good co-contraction. Lift your leg straight up from the bed, then lower slowly.  
Repeat 10 times.



Lying on your back with legs straight.  
Bend your ankles and push your knees down firmly against the bed.  
Hold 5 secs. Repeat 10 times.



Lying on the unaffected side raise the leg up then slowly lower. Ensure you have a good co-contraction.  
Repeat 10 times.



Place a wedge or rolled towel under your knee.  
Push your heel into the bed, tightening the muscles at the back of the thigh.  
Hold 5 secs. Repeat 10 times.



Lying on the affected side, with the good leg crossed in front. Raise the affected leg up and then slowly lower. Ensure you have a good co-contraction.  
Repeat 10 times.



Slide your heel towards your bottom, bending your knee.  
Repeat 10 times.



Lying face down raise your leg up off the bed. Ensure you have a good co-contraction.  
Repeat 10 times.



**Dr Jonathan Herald**

Shoulder, Elbow, Knee Surgeon  
MBBS, FRACS (Orth), FAOrthA



**Orthoclinic**  
Orthopaedic Clinic Sydney

P: (02) 9233 3946

F: (02) 9009 0663

E: info@orthoclinic.com.au

## Personal Exercise Program



Sit on a chair with your feet on the floor. Bend your knee as much as possible. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets per day.



Sit on a chair. Pull your toes up, tighten the front of your thigh muscle and straighten your knee slowly. Hold approx 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets per day.



Stand in front of a support. Hold on with both hands. Slowly squat down approx. 30 degrees keeping your back straight and heels on the floor. Hold for 5 seconds then straighten up again. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets per day.



Stand. Hold onto a support and bring one leg slightly backwards. Bend your knee and lift your foot off the floor. Hold 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets per day.



Stand. Holding onto a support surface. Push up on your toes. Hold 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets per day.



Stand in front of a 20-40cm step. Step up 10 times with one leg leading and then repeat with the other leg leading. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets per day.