



Tidewater Orthopaedics  
*Specialized Care You Can Trust*

# Arthroscopic Meniscectomy or Meniscus Repair

**Loel Z. Payne, M.D.**  
**Post-Operative Instructions after Surgery**

## Helpful Hints & Important Precautions for Patients

### DIET

- May resume clear liquids and light foods after surgery (jello, soup, etc.)
- Progress to your normal diet as tolerated as long as you are not nauseated.
- Many surgeries are done without general anesthesia. This allows you to resume a diet quicker with less nausea.

### PAIN MANAGEMENT

- The first 1-2 days are the hardest – but there will be improvement
- Surgery pain stems from multiple factors and you should address each of these to control the pain. Below is a chart to explain our multimodal pain control plan. I have also enclosed a QR code for a video on pain control.

### **Preoperative pain management**

1. Local injection - numbing medication is injected at the surgery site
2. Anti-nausea medication - such as Zofran or Scopolamine patch is given
3. Tylenol or an anti-inflammatory - such as Celebrex may be given

*I do not use a “pain pump” which drips the numbing medicine continually into the joint for several days after the surgery. Several recent studies have shown an increased risk of damage to the joint cartilage and subsequent arthritis as a result of prolonged exposure to this medication.*

### **Postoperative pain management**

1. Hydrocodone-Acetaminophen 1-2 tablets every 6 hours
  - This is a narcotic and should be used sparingly
  - If pain is severe and uncontrolled with other methods, you may take 3 pills at a time for the first 24 hours
  - Percocet and Vicodin (Norco) already have Tylenol in them so do not take Tylenol if you are on these medications. Straight Oxycodone does not.
  - They can easily become addictive
  - Narcotics decrease the body’s trigger to breathe, and I may prescribe a medication to reverse this narcotic side effect (Narcan) if you are currently taking anti-anxiety or sleeping medication
  - It is best to avoid these drugs (and alcohol) while on pain medication
  - Additional adverse effects:
    - Constipation and/or nausea
    - Decrease ability to concentrate and cause drowsiness - should not be taken while driving
    - Hallucinations
  - If you experience itching, take over the counter Benadryl one half hour before your narcotic.

2a. Tylenol 650 mg every 6 hours or 2 tablets of 500mg three times a day

- Limit to 3000 mg daily and avoid if history of liver disease. Use continuously for, at least, 3 days and then as needed.

2b. Naproxen 500 (2 Aleve) every 12 hours OR ibuprofen 800 (4 Advil) every 8 hours

- Take with food and avoid if history of ulcers, severe reflux or kidney disease. Continue for, at least, 5 days and then as needed.

3. Ice and Elevation

- Most important the first 48 hours following surgery – helps reduce swelling
- The ice pack should be large (like a big zip-lock bag or bag of peas) and held firmly on the area of your surgery
- Apply for 20 minutes, **at minimum**, every hour while awake if possible
- DO NOT place pillows under the operated knee as this can lead to stiffness. Instead place pillow under the heel to keep knee straight, elevating above the heart.
- Place a towel roll under your ankle and tighten your thigh muscles to get your knee to straighten out - **this is very important and should be done at least four times a day for twenty minutes if tolerated**
- Move your ankle back and forth many times during the day to help your circulation.

4. Physical therapy – is not typically required however stiffness is a common source of pain and therapy is often started several days postop

### **ADDITIONAL MEDICATIONS**

1. Aspirin 325mg twice a day for 3 weeks

- This medication is used to prevent blood clots after surgery
- While on a blood thinner you will bleed more easily – be careful shaving or activities that may cause injury
- If you experience bloody noses or bleeding in the urine or stool, notify our office or report to the ER
- If you have a history of a DVT/PE, you will be placed on Rivaroxaban (Xarelto) for 4 weeks

2. Ondansetron (Zofran) - this medication is used as needed for nausea

3. Colace – this is a stool softener for constipation

### **CONSTIPATION**

- This can be very common follow surgery typically due to pain medication, inactivity, and anesthesia

1. Treatment

- Begin using the **COLACE** as soon as starting the pain medication to help prevent constipation from occurring
- If NO bowel movement within **1-2 days** using this medication – **ADD DULCOLAX** which is a stimulant laxative
- If NO bowel movement **24-48 hours** following the use of both these medication – **please call the office**

2. Additional Treatment

- Hydration: aim for at least 4 glasses of water per day
- Diet: increase fiber with foods that include prunes, apples, spinach, and whole grains
- Physical Activity
- Laxatives: Milk of Magnesia, MiraLAX and Suppositories or Enemas

### 3. "Red Flag" Symptoms

- Prolonged constipation increases the risk of impaction or bowel obstruction
- IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY ROOM VISIT: abdominal pain/bloating, decrease or no passing gas, nausea and vomiting.

### **BANDAGE**

- Your post-operative dressing is a large, white fluffy dressing and absorbent pads that are held in place with an Ace bandage
- Remove this dressing 2-3 days after surgery and place band-aids over the incisions
- Because the surgery is performed arthroscopically, occasionally there will be water with a small amount of blood on this dressing. This is nothing to worry about. However, if you see a lot of bleeding, please call.

### **WASHING AND BATHING**

- **Keep the wound clean and dry for the first 2 weeks after surgery**
- Once the bandage is removed, it is OK to shower as long as the incisions are kept dry with plastic wrap or waterproof bandages
- Do not soak or submerge the knee until 4-6 weeks following surgery

### **ACTIVITY**

- You may return to sedentary work only or school in 3-4 days after surgery if your pain is tolerable
- Avoid long distance traveling in cars or by airplane during the first week after surgery to avoid increasing your risk of developing blood clots

### **Without a Repair**

- Unless there was a meniscal tear repair, you may put weight on the operated leg as tolerated
- There are no activity restrictions - it is encouraged you try to move around after surgery - this helps avoid blood clots and knee stiffness
- Some people use assistance with ambulation for a few days until pain improves

### **With a Repair**

- You will be in a brace to support the knee and keep it straight while walking – **this will be worn for about 4 weeks**
- You may remove the brace at night and while in a non-weightbearing position, allowing you to work on range of motion – this helps avoid stiffness and prevent blood clots
- You will be on crutches for 4 weeks and can only touch the weight of the leg to the ground (not your full weight)

### **FOLLOW-UP APPOINTMENT**

- We will see you back 2 weeks following the surgery to assess range of motion and the incisions. Sutures will be removed at this time as well.

### **WHAT TO WATCH OUT FOR**

- Pain that is increasing every hour in spite of the pain medication
- Drainage from the wound more than 2 days after surgery
- Increasing redness around the surgical site
- Fever greater than 101.5 degrees
- Unable to keep food or water down for more than one day

Need more information? Scan the QR code below to watch these helpful videos from Dr. Payne on Post Operative Care.





Prepared for: \_\_\_\_\_

Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_

## Knee Conditioning Program

### Purpose of Program

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After an injury or surgery, an exercise conditioning program will help you return to daily activities and enjoy a more active, healthy lifestyle. Following a well-structured conditioning program will also help you return to sports and other recreational activities.

This is a general conditioning program that provides a wide range of exercises. To ensure that the program is safe and effective for you, it should be performed under your doctor's supervision. Talk to your doctor or physical therapist about which exercises will best help you meet your rehabilitation goals.

**Strength:** Strengthening the muscles that support your knee will reduce stress on your knee joint. Strong muscles help your knee joint absorb shock.

**Flexibility:** Stretching the muscles that you strengthen is important for restoring range of motion and preventing injury. Gently stretching after strengthening exercises can help reduce muscle soreness and keep your muscles long and flexible.

**Target Muscles:** The muscle groups targeted in this conditioning program include:

- Quadriceps (front of the thigh)
- Hamstrings (back of the thigh)
- Abductors (outer thigh)
- Adductors (inner thigh)
- Gluteus medius and gluteus maximus (buttocks)

**Length of program:** This knee conditioning program should be continued for 4 to 6 weeks, unless otherwise specified by your doctor or physical therapist. After your recovery, these exercises can be continued as a maintenance program for lifelong protection and health of your knees. Performing the exercises 2 to 3 days a week will maintain strength and range of motion in your knees.

### Getting Started

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**Warmup:** Before doing the following exercises, warm up with 5 to 10 minutes of low impact activity, like walking or riding a stationary bicycle.

**Stretch:** After the warm-up, do the stretching exercises shown on Page 1 before moving on to the strengthening exercises. When you have completed the strengthening exercises, repeat the stretching exercises to end the program.

**Do not ignore pain:** You should not feel pain during an exercise. Talk to your doctor or physical therapist if you have any pain while exercising.

**Ask questions:** If you are not sure how to do an exercise, or how often to do it, contact your doctor or physical therapist.



## Knee Conditioning Program

### STRETCHING EXERCISES

#### 1. Heel Cord Stretch

##### Repetitions

2 sets of 4

##### Days per week

6 to 7

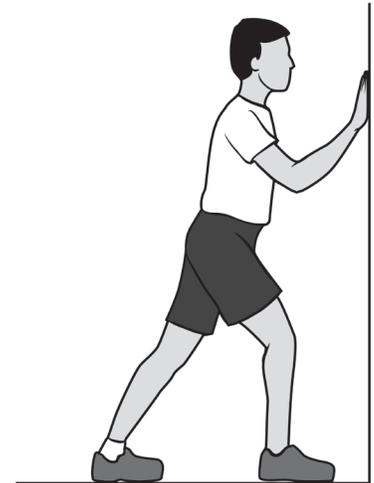
**Main muscles worked:** Gastrocnemius-soleus complex  
You should feel this stretch in your calf and into your heel

**Equipment needed:** None

##### Step-by-step directions

- Stand facing a wall with your unaffected leg forward with a slight bend at the knee. Your affected leg is straight and behind you, with the heel flat and the toes pointed in slightly.
- Keep both heels flat on the floor and press your hips forward toward the wall.
- Hold this stretch for 30 seconds and then relax for 30 seconds. Repeat.

**Tip** Do not arch your back.



#### 2. Standing Quadriceps Stretch

##### Repetitions

2 to 3

##### Days per week

4 to 5

**Main muscles worked:** Quadriceps  
You should feel this stretch in the front of your thigh

**Equipment needed:** None

##### Step-by-step directions

- Hold on to the back of a chair or a wall for balance.
- Bend your knee and bring your heel up toward your buttock.
- Grasp your ankle with your hand and gently pull your heel closer to your body.
- Hold this position for 30 to 60 seconds.
- Repeat with the opposite leg.

**Tip** Do not arch or twist your back.





## Knee Conditioning Program

### STRETCHING EXERCISES

#### 3. *Supine Hamstring Stretch*

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Repetitions
2 to 3

Days per week
4 to 5

**Main muscles worked:** Hamstrings

You should feel this stretch at the back of your thigh and behind your knee

**Equipment needed:** None

#### Step-by-step directions

- Lie on the floor with both legs bent.
- Lift one leg off of the floor and bring the knee toward your chest. Clasp your hands behind your thigh below your knee.
- Straighten your leg and then pull it gently toward your head, until you feel a stretch. (If you have difficulty clasping your hands behind your leg, loop a towel around your thigh. Grasp the ends of the towel and pull your leg toward you.)
- Hold this position for 30 to 60 seconds.
- Repeat with the opposite leg.



Tip
Do not put your hands at your knee joint and pull.



## Knee Conditioning Program

### STRENGTHENING EXERCISES

#### 4. Half Squats

##### Repetitions

3 sets of 10

##### Days per week

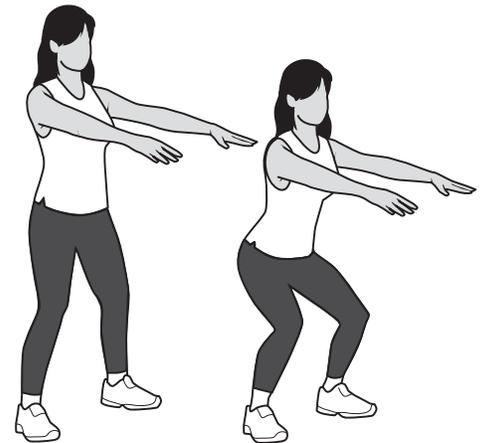
4 to 5

**Main muscles worked:** Quadriceps, gluteus, hamstrings  
You should feel this exercise at the front and back of your thighs, and your buttocks

**Equipment needed:** As the exercise becomes easier to perform, gradually increase the resistance by holding hand weights. Begin with 5-pound weights and gradually progress to a greater level of resistance, up to 10-pound weights.

##### Step-by-step directions

- Stand with your feet shoulder distance apart. Your hands can rest on the front of your thighs or reach in front of you. If needed, hold on to the back of a chair or wall for balance.
- Keep your chest lifted and slowly lower your hips about 10 inches, as if you are sitting down into a chair.
- Plant your weight in your heels and hold the squat for 5 seconds.
- Push through your heels and bring your body back up to standing.



**Tip** Do not bend forward at your waist.

#### 5. Hamstring Curls

##### Repetitions

3 sets of 10

##### Days per week

4 to 5

**Main muscles worked:** Hamstrings  
You should feel this exercise at the back of your thigh

**Equipment needed:** As the exercise becomes easier to perform, gradually increase the resistance by adding an ankle weight. Begin with a 5-pound weight and gradually progress to a greater level of resistance, up to a 10-pound weight. If you have access to a fitness center, this exercise can also be performed on a weight machine. A fitness assistant at your gym can instruct you on how to use the machines safely.

##### Step-by-step directions

- Hold onto the back of a chair or a wall for balance.
- Bend your affected knee and raise your heel toward the ceiling as far as possible without pain.
- Hold this position for 5 seconds and then relax. Repeat.



**Tip** Flex your foot and keep your knees close together.



## Knee Conditioning Program STRENGTHENING EXERCISES

### 6. Calf Raises

#### Repetitions

2 sets of 10

#### Days per week

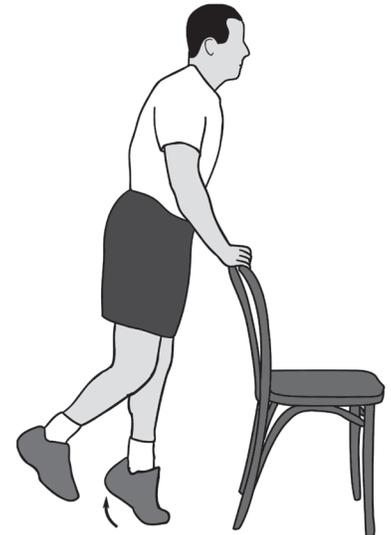
6 to 7

**Main muscles worked:** Gastrocnemius-soleus complex  
You should feel this exercise in your calf

**Equipment needed:** Chair for support

#### Step-by-step directions

- Stand with your weight evenly distributed over both feet. Hold onto the back of a chair or a wall for balance.
- Lift your unaffected foot off of the floor so that all of your weight is placed on your affected foot.
- Raise the heel of your affected foot as high as you can, then lower.
- Repeat 10 times.



**Tip** Keep your weight centered on the ball of your working foot.

### 7. Leg Extensions

#### Repetitions

3 sets of 10

#### Days per week

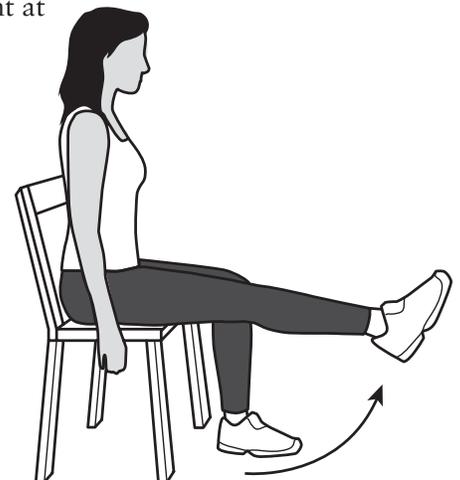
4 to 5

**Main muscles worked:** Quadriceps  
You should feel this exercise at the front of your thigh

**Equipment needed:** As the exercise becomes easier to perform, gradually increase the resistance by adding an ankle weight. Begin with a 5-pound weight and gradually progress to a greater level of resistance, up to a 10-pound weight. If you have access to a fitness center, this exercise can also be performed on a weight machine. A fitness assistant at your gym can instruct you on how to use the machines safely.

#### Step-by-step directions

- Sit up straight on a chair or bench.
- Tighten your thigh muscles and slowly straighten and raise your affected leg as high as possible.
- Squeeze your thigh muscles and hold this position for 5 seconds. Relax and bring your foot to the floor. Repeat.



**Tip** Do not swing your leg or use forceful momentum to lift it higher.



## Knee Conditioning Program

### STRENGTHENING EXERCISES

#### 8. Straight-Leg Raises

##### Repetitions

3 sets of 10

##### Days per week

4 to 5

**Main muscles worked:** Quadriceps  
You should feel this exercise at the front of your thigh

**Equipment needed:** As the exercise becomes easier to perform, gradually increase the resistance by adding an ankle weight. Begin with a 5-pound weight and gradually progress to a greater level of resistance, up to a 10-pound weight. If you have access to a fitness center, this exercise can also be performed on a weight machine. A fitness assistant at your gym can instruct you on how to use the machines safely.

##### Step-by-step directions

- Lie on the floor with your elbows directly under your shoulders to support your upper body.
- Keep your affected leg straight and bend your other leg so that your foot is flat on the floor.
- Tighten the thigh muscle of your affected leg and slowly raise it 6 to 10 inches off the floor.
- Hold this position for 5 seconds and then relax and bring your leg to the floor. Repeat.



**Tip** Do not tense up in your neck and shoulders.

#### 9. Straight-Leg Raises (Prone)

##### Repetitions

3 sets of 10

##### Days per week

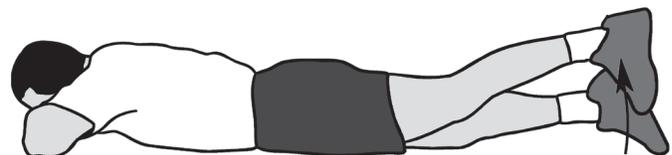
4 to 5

**Main muscles worked:** Hamstrings, gluteus  
You should feel this exercise at the back of your thigh and into your buttock

**Equipment needed:** As the exercise becomes easier to perform, gradually increase the resistance by adding an ankle weight. Begin with a 5-pound weight and gradually progress to a greater level of resistance, up to a 10-pound weight. If you have access to a fitness center, this exercise can also be performed on a weight machine. A fitness assistant at your gym can instruct you on how to use the machines safely.

##### Step-by-step directions

- Lie on the floor on your stomach with your legs straight. Rest your head on your arms.
- Tighten your gluteus and hamstring muscles of the affected leg and raise the leg toward the ceiling as high as you can.
- Hold this position for 5 seconds.
- Lower your leg and rest it for 2 seconds. Repeat.



**Tip** Keep your pelvic bones on the floor.



## Knee Conditioning Program

### STRENGTHENING EXERCISES

#### 10. Hip Abduction

##### Repetitions

3 sets of 20

##### Days per week

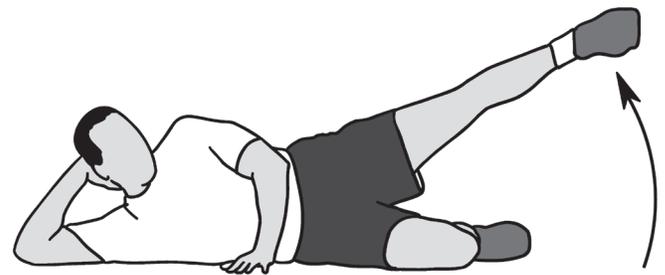
4 to 5

**Main muscles worked:** Abductors, gluteus  
You should feel this exercise at your outer thigh and buttock

**Equipment needed:** As the exercise becomes easier to perform, gradually increase the resistance by adding an ankle weight. Begin with a 5-pound weight and gradually progress to a greater level of resistance, up to a 10-pound weight.

##### Step-by-step directions

- Lie on your side with your injured leg on top and the bottom leg bent to provide support.
- Straighten your top leg and slowly raise it to 45°, keeping your knee straight, but not locked.
- Hold this position for 5 seconds.
- Slowly lower your leg and relax it for 2 seconds. Repeat.



**Tip** Do not rotate your leg in an effort to raise it higher.

#### 11. Hip Adduction

##### Repetitions

3 sets of 20

##### Days per week

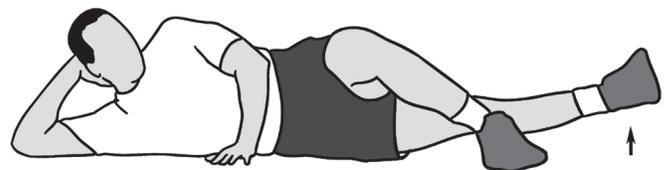
4 to 5

**Main muscles worked:** Adductors  
You should feel this exercise at your inner thigh

**Equipment needed:** As the exercise becomes easier to perform, gradually increase the resistance by adding an ankle weight. Begin with a 5-pound weight and gradually progress to a greater level of resistance, up to a 10-pound weight.

##### Step-by-step directions

- Lie down on the floor on the side of your injured leg with both legs straight.
- Cross the uninjured leg in front of the injured leg.
- Raise the injured leg 6 to 8 inches off the floor.
- Hold this position for 5 seconds.
- Lower your leg and rest for 2 seconds. Repeat.



**Tip** Place your hand on the floor in front of your stomach for support.



## Knee Conditioning Program

### STRENGTHENING EXERCISES

#### 12. Leg Presses

##### Repetitions

3 sets of 10

##### Days per week

4 to 5

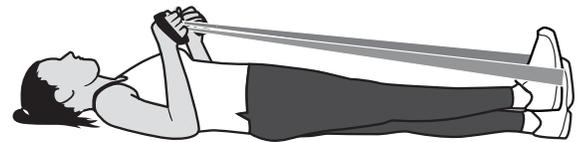
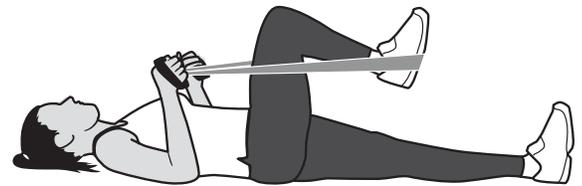
**Main muscles worked:** Quadriceps, hamstrings

You should feel this exercise at the front of your hip, and the front and back of your thigh

**Equipment needed:** This exercise is best performed using an elastic stretch band of comfortable resistance. As the exercise becomes easier to perform, gradually increase the level of resistance. Do not use ankle weights with this exercise. If you have access to a fitness center, this exercise can also be performed on a weight machine. A fitness assistant at your gym can instruct you on how to use the machines safely.

#### Step-by-step directions

- Place the center of the elastic band at the arch of your foot and hold the ends in each hand. Lie on the floor with your elbows bent.
- Tighten the thigh muscle of your affected leg and bring your knee toward your chest.
- Flex your foot and slowly straighten your leg directly in front of you, pushing against the elastic band.
- Hold this position for 2 seconds. Relax and bring your leg to the floor. Repeat.



**Tip** Keep your abdominals tight throughout the exercise.