

## Post-Operative Instructions Total Knee Replacement

### Activity

- You can place your full weight on the operative leg (i.e. **weight bearing as tolerated**), you can use crutches for assistance.
- **Strict elevation of the operative knee for the first 72 hours will help decrease pain and swelling.**
  - You may feel increased pain or pressure any time the knee drops below the level of your heart.
- **Maintaining full knee extension** is critical during the postoperative phase
  - Placing a rolled towel or pillow under your heel will help with knee extension
- Formal physical therapy will begin after your first surgical follow-up visit.

### Pain Control

- Apply ice to the knee for 15 minutes as often as every hour. You may continue this for as many days as you like.
- You have been prescribed a pain medication that contains a narcotic. Do not drink alcohol, drive a car or operate heavy machinery while on this medication.
  - Do NOT take Tylenol (acetaminophen) while on this medication as it may cause an overdose.
- You may take anti-inflammatory medications such as Ibuprofen or Naprosyn (with food) in addition to the pain medication.

### Wound Care

- **Do not remove your surgical dressing. Keep them clean and dry.** They will be changed during your postoperative evaluation.
- Sponge baths with assistance are recommended.
- You may experience slight bruising and swelling to the operative leg.

### Follow-up Appointment

- Your follow-up appointment should be 10-14 days after surgery, please call the office if you do not have an appointment. We will review the findings from your surgery and remove your sutures during this visit.
- Please call the office with any questions or concerns, or if you experience any of the following: fevers (greater than 101°F), chills, increased numbness, swelling, pain, redness or increasing drainage at the incision.