



PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

ACL Rehabilitation – Mr Henry Bourke’s Patients

STAGE 1 0-14 days RECOVERY

- Pain control – take the tablets that you have been given to go home with in the first 48 hours even if it’s not painful. After that take as required but do not exceed the maximum dose
- Regular ice (20 minutes maximum) to decrease swelling
- Range-of movement should be returning to normal slowly – concentrate particularly on straightening the knee gently
- Off crutches and begin normal walking – patients can fully weight-bear unless instructed otherwise
- Keep wounds dry – patients can shower but the waterproof dressing must be removed and replaced if the dressings get wet. Cling film from the kitchen cupboard can be useful (2-3 wraps) to keep the knee dry in the shower

YOU MUST TRY TO SEE A PHYSIOTHERAPIST AT LEAST ONCE IN THIS PERIOD – If you have not been assigned a physiotherapist please contact Mr Bourke’s secretary.

STAGE 2 2-6 weeks MUSCLE AND JOINT MOVEMENT

- Wounds should be healed (scabbed over) by 2 weeks. Most patients have dissolving stitches but if you have had stitches that need removing (Mr Bourke will advise) then stitches need to come out at 14 days
- Begin gentle exercise. Patients should not need crutches by this stage
- Exercises recommended
 - walking (1-2 miles maximum)
 - swimming (wounds must be healed)
 - exercise bike (no hills/no resistance)
 - gym (stepper, x-trainer, leg-press)
 - NO RUNNING.

STAGE 3 6-12 weeks MUSCLE STRENGTHENING

- Mr Bourke will usually see you in outpatients before this stage begins



- Range-of-movement of the knee should be similar to the other knee by now
- Open-chain exercises can begin
- Gentle running can start from 8 weeks, ideally on a treadmill or very flat ground
- If the knee is swelling after running, then ease down and try lesser impact activities for a while and keep applying ice
- The hamstring tendons are re-growing at this stage and it is fairly normal to feel tight here and to feel twinges/small tears as the scar tissue forms.

STAGE 4 3-5 months AGILITY, FLEXIBILITY & PROPRIOCEPTION

- Begin proprioception training exercises (teaching the knee and brain to work together again), these will be guided by your physio
- These are often sports specific depending on your sport
 - Jumpers need to practice good landing technique
 - Ball players can start basic balls skills
 - Backwards and sideways running
- Warm-up and warm-down exercises highly – please view PEP Program on youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t_yz7yWLo5o

STAGE 5 6-12 months PLANNING RETURN TO SPORTS

- Improve confidence and skills in your chosen sports
- Begin to gently return to contact sports in practice matches.
- Please ensure you have told your physiotherapist which sports you participate in so they you can begin a tailored sports-specific exercise programme for you.

STAGE 6 12+ months RETURN TO SPORTS

- The aim of all these stages are a safe return to sports
- Mr Bourke and your physiotherapist will discuss this with you. The timing of this depends on your age, chosen sports, severity of the knee injury and your progress over the first 5 stages
- You will see Mr Bourke in clinic sometime between 6-12 months and he will discuss this with you and when you are ready to return
- On-going agility training and muscle strengthening throughout your sporting career will help protect the knee from further injury
- The PEP programme is recommended throughout your sporting career even when the rehabilitation is complete.



CONTACT DETAILS

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