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Instruction Sheet following Total Knee Arthroplasty

Showering:

You may shower 48 hours after surgery. Please use **CAUTION!!** Be careful not to slip and fall. The effects of anesthesia and/or medication may make you drowsy or light-headed. Do not submerge your sutures (stitches) in a bathtub, hot tub, or pool until the doctor tells you it is okay to do so. Once you are done showering pat the wound dry.

Dressing:

Remove all white dressings 48 hours after surgery. Keep the yellow, rubbery bandage over your incision **ON**—this may stay on for up to 2 weeks and is waterproof (you may shower over this bandage).

Cane/Walker:

You may **weight bear as tolerated**/walk on the leg as you feel comfortable and may use a walker or cane as needed for walking. A walker is often needed for about a week, followed by transition to a cane, until you are walking assistance free.

Ice and Elevation:

You can ice the knee to reduce swelling and discomfort. Do not ice the knee more than 20 minutes at a time. Let the knee warm up for about 20 minutes before reapplication. When you are not walking your leg should be straight with a pillow under your foot or ankle (not behind your knee). Try to elevate knee as much as possible to reduce swelling. If you have a cryocuff, you may use this continuously.

Physical Therapy:

Aggressive physical therapy beginning the day of surgery is done to quickly regain range of motion and strength of the knee and minimize pain and swelling.

Follow-up visit:

You need to see the doctor about 12-14 days following surgery for your first post-op visit. At that time your sutures or staples will be removed.

Common Concerns:

Bruising and/or swelling of the knee, ankle, or foot are common after surgery. To relieve this discomfort it is best to ice and elevate the knee.

Please call if:

1. If at any time you have discomfort, hardness, swelling, or redness in the calf (behind the



- leg between the knee and the ankle) please call the doctor immediately.
2. Any oozing or redness of the wound, fevers (>101.3 degrees F), or chills.
 3. Any difficulty breathing or heaviness in the chest.

REMEMBER - these are only guidelines for what to expect following a total knee arthroplasty. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to call the office.