

Patient Discharge
Instructions #2



Knee Arthroscopy with ACL Reconstruction

Physician: **Dr. Berasi**

OrthoNeuro

Phone: (614) 890-6555

Surgical Procedure: ACL reconstructive surgery is performed with the assistance of an arthroscope; it may be done on an outpatient basis, or you may stay in the hospital overnight. The torn ACL is replaced by a graft, as a torn ACL cannot heal. Grafts most commonly used include: (1) the central one third of the patellar tendon, from the same or opposite knee; (2) hamstring tendons; (3) quadriceps tendon; and (4) allograft (a transplant from a cadaver). Each graft has its benefits and risks. All other structures in the knee are evaluated at the same time, including the meniscus.

Please view our website at www.OrthoNeuro1.com for more information. Click on **Patient Education**, then click on **Knee**. The Viewmedica window has information on anatomy, conditions and surgical techniques. There is also an option to print the information.

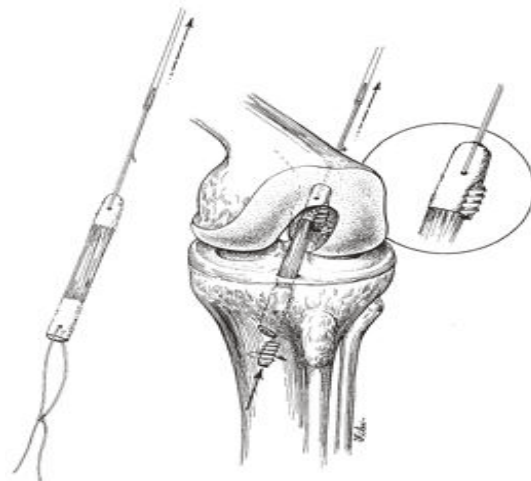


Figure 1

Bone tunnels are drilled through the lower leg (tibia) and the thigh bone (femur) to place the ligament in the same position as the torn ACL. The graft is held in position with screws, heavy sutures, or washers. The devices used to hold the graft in place usually do not need to be removed.

Before Surgery

- ◆ Please read all of your instructions and follow them carefully.
- ◆ Dr. Berasi tries to speak with every patient immediately before surgery. On rare occasions, he may not be able to do so, if your case is moved to a different OR in order to expedite your treatment.
- ◆ Your surgery time is an estimate that depends upon coordinating patients, personnel, doctors, OR rooms, and equipment. We apologize if you must wait, but rest assured that we will take all the time needed to do your surgery.
- ◆ Dr. Berasi will call your family immediately upon completing your surgery. If your family is not available at that time, please call the office the following day.
- ◆ Arthroscopic pictures will be taken and explained to you at your first office visit. You will also receive a copy of the pictures.

Diet

- ◆ Return to your normal diet slowly. Start with liquids. Progress to a regular diet if you are not nauseated.
- ◆ Do not drink any alcoholic beverages for 24 hours or while you are taking narcotic pain medication.
- ◆ You will need a diet high in fiber until you return to your usual activities.
- ◆ If you are diabetic, check with your family physician about diet and medication.

Safety and Activity

- ◆ Arrange for an adult to drive you home from the hospital and stay with you for the first 24 hours after surgery.
- ◆ Limit your activity for 24 hours. You may feel dizzy; take care as you walk or climb stairs.
- ◆ Do not drive or operate machinery for 24 hours or while you are taking narcotic pain medication.
- ◆ Do not make important personal decisions or sign legal papers for 24 hours.
- ◆ **On the day of surgery**, remain in your knee immobilizer, elevate and ice your knee, and leave your dressing intact.
- ◆ **Begin Physical Therapy on the 1st day after surgery.** They will remove your knee immobilizer, change your dressing, and initiate exercises.

Safety and Activity (continued)

- ◆ Beginning on the 1st day after surgery, you should only wear your knee immobilizer when sleeping. During the day, work on exercises to regain your motion. It is OK to use your immobilizer for situations where you are fearful of falling, such as crowds or bad weather.
- ◆ You must use your crutches for the first two weeks after surgery. You may bear up to 50% of your weight. Dr. Berasi will likely allow you to gradually discontinue your crutches after your first appointment.
- ◆ You may return to sports when you have regained full knee range of motion, muscle strength, endurance and functional use. Physical therapy is very important and will allow you to reach your goals. This usually requires 4-6 months following ACL reconstruction.
- ◆ Physically demanding jobs may require a similar amount of time. Patients with sedentary jobs may return to work in 3-14 days. Discuss this with Dr. Berasi prior to returning to work.

Pain Management

- ◆ Rest and take your pain medication as needed.
- ◆ Your physician will prescribe pain medication. Many patients do well taking ibuprofen, 600mg-800mg every 8 hours with food, if they have no known contra-indications.
- ◆ If you have no contraindication, also take one 325mg aspirin daily with food for the first 2 weeks.
- ◆ Ice the knee whenever possible for 15 minutes, every 1-2 hours, while awake for the first 1-2 weeks after surgery. Thereafter, continue to ice your knee if you experience pain or swelling.

Wound Care

- ◆ The physical therapist will change your dressing the first day after surgery.
- ◆ You may shower 3 days after surgery. Do not bathe or use a hot tub.
- ◆ Continue to wrap your knee until the swelling has resolved. This may take several weeks or months.

Post Anesthesia Instructions

- ◆ If you received general anesthesia, you may have a dry, raspy sore throat. Throat lozenges may relieve this. You may also have 1-2 days of muscle soreness.
- ◆ If you received spinal or epidural anesthesia, you may have pain at the injection site. Rarely patients may have a headache. If you do, stay in bed (getting up to go to the bathroom only), drink plenty of fluids and take Tylenol (Acetaminophen) 650 mg. every 4 hours. Do not exceed 4000 mg. in a 24 hour period. Call us at (614) 775-6600 if you have not urinated within 6 hours, your headache persists after 2 days, you develop new leg weakness or numbness, or you experience an inability to control your bowels or bladder.

Post Anesthesia Instructions (continued)

- ◆ After a regional nerve block, you may not have return of movement or feeling to the operative leg for up to 24 hours after the block is placed. Protect the affected leg until normal movement and feeling return. No weight bearing on any blocked (numbed) leg until weakness and numbness is completely gone. Some pain at the injection site is normal. If you have severe pain at the injection site, contact the Anesthesia Department at (614) 775-6600.

Follow Up Appointment

- ◆ Make an appointment to see Dr. Berasi 12-14 days after your surgery.

Contact your doctor immediately if you have any of the following:

- ◆ Heavy or persistent bleeding.
- ◆ Difficulty breathing or swallowing.
- ◆ Fever over 101°F.
- ◆ Changes in the color or temperature of your foot or toes.
- ◆ Sudden onset of numbness after nerve block resolved.
- ◆ Sudden, severe pain or pain not relieved by medication.
- ◆ Redness, swelling or pus around the incision.
- ◆ Inability to urinate within 6 hours of leaving the hospital.

For after hour emergencies, contact the doctor at (614) 890-6555. If symptoms are severe, go to the nearest emergency room or call 911.