

# Knee Arthroscopy: Recovering at Home

It'll take some time to get back to normal after knee arthroscopy.

Here are things you can do at home to help yourself recover.

It'll be hard to get around for the first 2 or 3 days ... so, if possible, plan to have a friend or family member to help you at home.

At first, you may need to use crutches or a brace.

If you do, your doctor will tell you how long to use them.

You'll feel tired for a few days after surgery ... so take it easy.

Rest when you get tired, and get enough sleep.

Your knee will be painful and swollen. Be sure to take your pain medicine exactly as directed. Taking it on a regular schedule can help you stay in control of the pain.

And for the first 3 days after surgery ... anytime you sit or lie down ...

prop your sore leg on a pillow, with your knee above the level of your heart.

This can help reduce pain and swelling. Using an ice pack can help too.

To reduce the risk of infection, keep your cuts ... your incisions ...

clean and dry until they heal. If you have a bandage on your knee, change it if it gets wet or dirty. In most cases, the bandage can be removed 48 to 72 hours after surgery.

You can shower when your doctor says it's okay ... probably 24 to 48 hours after surgery ... but if you have a bandage, cover it with plastic to keep it dry.

A garbage bag works great for this ... Just tape it around the top.

You'll be given exercises to do at home. Doing them will help you get back the flexibility in your knee and strength in your leg.

Walking can help too. Once your doctor says it's okay to start walking, try to do a little more every day.

Your doctor will tell you when it's safe for you to drive.

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For most people, it's a week or two after surgery.

How long it takes to recover from arthroscopy depends on what was done to your knee and how well you heal.

If you have a desk job, you may be able to go back to work in a week or two ...

But if you do physical labor, it may be anywhere from 2 months to 6 months before you can get back to work.

If you play sports, your doctor will let you know when it's safe to start again.

Any surgery has some risk ... so watch for problems, and talk to your care provider if you have questions or concerns.

Call your doctor if you have ...

... Pain that doesn't go away after you take pain medicine.

... Loose stitches.

... Bleeding from the incision.

... Or signs of infection, such as ... increased pain, swelling, warmth, or redness ...

red streaks leading from the incision ... or a fever.

Now, this may seem like a lot to do ... but all of these things are important ...

because they can help you heal and stay out of the hospital.