



Banff Sport Medicine

BANFF SPORT MEDICINE
Orthopaedic Surgeons

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banffsportmed.ca

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PRE-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

PREPARING FOR SURGERY

1 Month Before:

If you are taking acne medication: Research has shown that Accutane (Isotretinoin) which is used to treat acne can interfere with healing after orthopaedic surgery and may be a factor in tissue and graft stretching or failure. To ensure that your surgery is not cancelled ***please stop taking Accutane at least 1 month prior to your surgery date.*** You should not restart Accutane medication for at least 3 months after your surgery.

2 Weeks Before:

Stop taking: Advil, Motrin, and Aspirin as well as all Herbal Supplements for ***10-14 days prior to your surgery date.*** This is important because these medications and supplements can increase your risk of bleeding.

1 Week Before (approximately):

A nurse from the hospital will contact you approximately one week prior to your surgery date to give you information regarding your surgery.

Day/Night Before:

CLEAR FLUIDS ONLY (Gatorade, apple or cranberry juice, water - pulp free, clear) ***from Midnight (24:00) to 2hrs prior to arrival to hospital*** (4 hrs before surgery).

Do not shave your surgical site the day before or the day of your surgery.

You may brush your teeth and rinse your mouth but do not swallow any water.

DAY OF SURGERY

- Date and time will be confirmed with you approximately 2 weeks before your surgery.
- Check-in at the Admitting Desk or Emergency Department of the hospital.
- If required for your surgery, please bring your own crutches to the hospital, clearly marked with your name. The hospital has a VERY limited supply of crutches for sale at this time. The hospital does carry braces for purchase if needed after your surgery.
- You **MUST** have someone drive you home from the hospital.

AFTER YOUR SURGERY

- Your first Follow up Appointment details (if required) will be included in an email from our office which you will receive on or shortly after the day of your surgery.
- If you have any problems or complications after your surgery please refer to the Post-Op Concerns section included in your surgery package or refer to our website - <https://banffsportmed.ca/after-your-surgery/>.



Pre-Operative Information

High Tibial Osteotomy (HTO)

What is an “HTO”?

A High Tibial Osteotomy is an operation that involves cutting your tibia bone to realign the weight-bearing axis of the leg. The purpose is to take body weight off an arthritic part of the knee. It can also be used in certain cases to treat instability of the knee. When the tibia bone is wedged open, the gap is filled with bone graft. This can come from your pelvis (autograft) or from the bone bank (allograft). Synthetic bone graft can also be used along with, or as an alternative to, the autograft or allograft. Your surgeon will discuss these options with you.

Diagnosis:

- A history of medial or lateral compartment osteoarthritis of the knee
- Physical examination shows either varus (bow-legged) or valgus (knock-kneed) alignment of the knee
- A three-foot standing x-ray is used to determine the degree of correction that is needed to unload the affected compartment of the knee

Why perform an “HTO”?

- To alleviate pain and functional limitations from unicompartmental arthritis of the knee
- To prevent increased severity of osteoarthritis and additional damage to the cartilage of the affected compartment of the knee
- To treat certain types of knee instability

Options other than HTO Surgery

- General treatment modalities for osteoarthritis include weight loss, muscle strengthening, physiotherapy, medications, and supportive shoes
- Knee brace - some people with osteoarthritis can use a custom-made unloading knee brace to manage pain and symptoms
- Hyaluronic Acid Injections - Synvisc, Durolane, Orthovisc, Neovisc etc.
- Total knee replacement or partial knee replacement – not all patients with unicompartmental osteoarthritis are candidates for HTO. Other factors such as age, general health and activity level may make full or partial knee replacement surgery a more suitable option.

About the Surgery Timing

- We recommended all patients stay as active as possible before surgery by following the pre-surgery rehabilitation program. This will allow you to improve or maintain range of knee motion, improve your strength and balance, and build your endurance by doing non-impact sports (biking, swimming, elliptical). Regaining strength, increasing movement in your knee, and maintaining your fitness will prepare you for surgery and will also help you to recover faster after surgery.
- If your knee symptoms improve significantly while you are preparing for surgery and you would like to discuss non-operative management of your knee problem please call the office (403 760 2897) to arrange a follow-up appointment before your surgery date.

The Procedure

Described here for a medial opening wedge HTO for the treatment of medial compartment osteoarthritis

- A vertical skin incision 6-8cm long is made along the inside of the upper shin bone (tibia) just below the knee joint line.
- The medial side, front and back of the upper tibia are carefully exposed to prevent injury to blood vessels, nerves and tendons.
- Under x-ray guidance, the upper tibia is cut from medial to lateral, and wedged open to correct the mechanical alignment of the knee.
- The osteotomy is stabilized with a metal plate and screws, and bone graft is inserted into the wedge-shaped opening in the tibia bone to improve healing of the osteotomy.
- Usually the skin layer is closed with dissolving sutures, but occasionally metal staples, or clips are used and these must be removed at about 2-weeks after surgery.
- Your surgeon may perform an arthroscopy of your knee at the same time as the HTO to assess all knee structures, remove cartilage debris and smooth out rough joint surfaces.



RISKS

- *Infection: less than 3 in 100*
 - Intravenous antibiotics are given before and after surgery to help prevent infection.
 - If an infection occurs, it will usually happen within 5-7 days of your surgery. Some minor wound infections can be treated with a short course of oral antibiotics, whereas more severe wound or skin infections may require a longer course of intravenous antibiotics. If the osteotomy site becomes infected, surgery is required to wash out the infection, followed by 4-6 weeks of intravenous antibiotics. In less than 1 in 200 cases, a deep infection can occur in the joint or bone. In these cases, surgery is required to wash out the infection, followed by 2-3 months of intravenous antibiotics.
- *Clot in Leg Veins (deep vein thrombosis): less than 5 in 100*
 - If severe calf, ankle and foot swelling occurs 3 days to 2 weeks after surgery, you could have a clot in a deep vein of your leg (DVT). See a doctor as soon as possible. Treatment for a blood clot is usually blood-thinning medication (anticoagulants) for 3-6 months.
- *Clot in Lungs (pulmonary emboli): less than 1 in 500*
 - It is possible for a blood clot to travel to your lung; this is called a pulmonary embolism. If you suddenly get short of breath or have chest pain go to the nearest emergency room or call 911. A pulmonary embolism is a medical emergency and can cause death.
 - In certain patients with risk factors for a blood clot, preventive blood thinners will be prescribed for a short period of time after surgery
- *Injury to Artery or Nerve: less than 1 in 500*
 - This is a very rare occurrence but can happen if an artery or nerve is stretched too much or cut during surgery.
- *Non-union: less than 5 in 100*
 - The gap created in your tibia bone must heal in a similar manner as a fracture. In some people, the bone healing may be delayed or not heal at all. This is much more likely if you are a smoker or need to have a larger bony correction of your alignment
 - When non-union occurs it may require additional surgery with more bone grafting to encourage healing. In some situations a patient may be required to purchase or rent a bone stimulator machine to enhance healing

- *Compartment Syndrome: less than 1 in 100*
 - Usually occurs 24-48 hours post-surgery when severe swelling develops in the muscle compartments below the knee and requires repeat surgery to release the pressure (fasciotomy).
- *Skin Numbness around Incision:*
 - Every patient gets some numbness around their incision because some small surface nerves are cut during surgery. This can be along the incision or can affect a larger area of the leg (up to 20 sq. cms). This may disappear slowly over time, depending on the patient.
- *Knee Stiffness: less than 5 in 100*
 - Some patients have problems with knee stiffness after HTO surgery. These patients will need intensive physiotherapy and may need another surgery to mobilize the joint.
- *Persistent Swelling and Pain: less than 5 in 100*
 - The HTO improves the biomechanics of your knee but doesn't change the amount of wear in your knee. Some patients will have ongoing pain and swelling from their osteoarthritis. This can be managed with injections and other non-operative treatments for arthritis.

Your Stay in Hospital

- You are not allowed to have anything to eat or drink after midnight (24:00) before to your surgery.
- If you have prescribed medications you need to take each day, the nurse from the Pre-Assessment Clinic will give you instructions before your surgery about if and when to take them.
- Please do not go to the dentist two weeks before, and six weeks after surgery, due to the increased risk of infection.
- You will be admitted to the hospital on the day of your surgery. Your admission time will be approximately 3 hours prior to your actual surgery time. Report to the Front Desk of the Banff Mineral Springs Hospital, unless instructed otherwise. Your surgery will take 1-2 hours.
- You can have an HTO with either a general or spinal anaesthetic. Some of our research suggests that patients have less overall pain and require less pain medication when having spinal anaesthetic. Your anaesthetist will discuss these options with you on the day of surgery.
- Most patients will stay in hospital for 2-3 nights after surgery although you have the option of going home after one night if your pain is well controlled.
- If you have insurance forms please bring them to our office on the day of, or before your surgery. This will ensure your forms are completed and posted back in time. Alberta Health Care does not cover the cost of completing insurance forms and a fee will be charged.

Other Costs

- Crutches can be purchased at the Banff Mineral Springs Hospital. If you bring your own with you please make sure they are clearly labeled.
- Cold Therapy Unit - is used to help control pain and swelling after the surgery. This unit can be purchased from our office by ordering at least a week before your surgery. The order form is included in this package
- Brace - A hinged knee brace may be prescribed by your surgeon to protect your knee for the first 6-12 weeks. This can be purchased from the hospital.

Postoperative Pain Control

- Rest, ice, compression, and elevation of your surgery leg
- You will be given a prescription for pain medication (Tylenol #3 or Percocet) and sometimes an anti-inflammatory (Naprosyn) before you leave the hospital. You may take an anti-inflammatory medication along with your pain medication. If you have medication allergies or intolerances, other suitable medications will be substituted.

Postoperative Wound Care

- The nurses will check the dressing on your knee before you go home, and replace it if necessary. You should take this dressing off 4 days after your surgery. If the tensor bandage on your leg rolls-up or causes pressure in one area you should take it off and have someone reapply it for you.
- You may be given an Aquacel dressing, which is kept on for two weeks. You can shower with this dressing on.
- For all other dressings, you may shower 4-days after surgery and should dry your incisions gently with a clean towel. You can peel the steri-strips off 2-weeks after your surgery. You may also cut any clear stitches that can be seen at skin level.
- Due to the risk of infection, do not fully immerse the incisions in bath water for 2-3 weeks after your surgery and do not enter a swimming pool or hot tub for at least 3-weeks after surgery.
- Redness and pain along the shin (caused by blood and inflammation in the area) can occur 3-7 days after surgery. This usually goes away 7-10 days after surgery and is not a concern unless your incisions are also red.
- **If you have concerns please call our office at 403-760-2897 during business hours. Of an evening or weekend please call the Banff Mineral Springs Hospital at 403-762-2222, before seeing your family physician or going to an emergency clinic.**

Discharge from Hospital

- Before noon (12:00) the day of discharge.
- You must have someone to drive you home
- Ensure you have your prescriptions for pain medication, anti-inflammatory medication and physiotherapy
- A hospital physiotherapist will instruct you on brace use and crutch walking. You will be given a rehabilitation protocol to take to your therapist
- Minimum 1-week resting at home with leg elevated and regularly icing your knee
- No or minimal weight bearing for 4-6 weeks
- Crutches may be used for up to 12 weeks depending on bone healing
- Discuss any travel plans with your surgeon as long trips can increase the risk of blood clots for the first 6-8 weeks after surgery

Follow-up Visits with Dr. Heard/ Buchko/ Hiemstra

- Your surgeon will follow you after surgery at: 2-4 weeks, 6 weeks, 3-months, 6-months, 1-year and 2-years. The surgeon's medical office assistant will give you the time, date and location of your first post-operative appointment when they call you before your surgery. You will have x-rays taken at 2-4 weeks, 6-8 weeks and 12-16 weeks postoperatively.

Return to Work Guidelines

- Sedentary work: 2-6 weeks- must be able to stay non-weight bearing
- Light manual work: 3-4 months
- Heavy manual work: 6-9 months

Physiotherapy

- See your physiotherapist about one week after your surgery.
- The hospital physiotherapist will give you the Banff Sport Medicine Post-operative HTO Rehabilitation Protocol. Please take the protocol to your physiotherapist for him/her to follow. If you or your therapist has any questions, please call our office at 403-760-2897.
- Based on your goals and your insurance coverage, you should discuss an appointment plan with your physiotherapist during your first post-operative visit. If you have limited funding for physiotherapy please make sure you space your visits out over the first six months post-surgery.

Return to Full Activities and Sports

- Your surgeon will be able to tell you when you can go back to sport. For most patients, you can start biking on a stationary bike (with a high seat and at minimal resistance) at two weeks and can start impact activities after 6 months after surgery. The type of sport and your level of strength and function (when we test you) will help to guide the surgeon's recommendations.
- Some patients who have more damage inside their knee may be told to protect their knee by doing fewer sports and activities that use a lot of running, jumping or pivoting. This is important to avoid too much load on damaged joint surfaces and may help to delay arthritis. Your surgeon will give you advice about return to sport based on the amount of damage seen inside your knee at the time of surgery.



Pre - Operative Rehabilitation Program for High Tibial Osteotomy

This protocol is designed to assist you with your preparation for surgery and should be followed under the direction of a physiotherapist



Covenant Health
Banff Mineral Springs

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Banff Sport Medicine

THE HIGH TIBIAL OSTEOTOMY PROCEDURE:



High Tibial Osteotomy (HTO) is a common procedure for managing medial osteoarthritis (OA) of the knee. In a knee osteotomy the surgeon adds a wedge of bone to your upper tibia. This helps shift your body weight off the damaged or worn out area of your knee joint onto healthier bone. An osteotomy can decrease pain, improve knee function, slow damage in the knee, and delay the need for partial or total knee replacement surgery. Studies have shown that an HTO can delay knee replacement for up to 15 years.

HTO can also be performed to decrease the load on pre-arthritic lesions in the knee, to correct knee alignment, or to treat certain knee ligament instabilities by changing the slope and alignment of the knee to increase stability.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PRE-SURGERY EXERCISES:

The surgeons at Banff Sport Medicine recommend an exercise program or 'pre-habilitation' before surgery. Regaining the strength and movement in your knee before surgery will improve your recovery after HTO surgery. Muscles play a very important role in knee stabilization and they react to the amount of stress placed on them. With a decreased amount of stress (e.g. immobilization, instability, decreased weight-bearing), the muscles weaken and atrophy (waste away). For this reason, the exercises in this program are extremely important to help you to prepare for surgery.

This exercise program has several important benefits:

- Return range of motion to normal and decrease the risk of post-operative stiffness
- Increase muscle strength in your legs and core
- Improve balance
- Maintain fitness in preparation for surgery
- Decrease the time to full recovery after surgery
- Decrease the risk of post-operative complications such as deep vein thrombosis

The following exercise program is a guideline. Other exercises that strengthen the same muscle groups can be substituted or added if desired. Some exercises may cause pain or flare-up your knee; if this happens the exercise should be avoided and an easier exercise included instead. These exercises range in difficulty from easiest to more challenging and you should slowly build up your number of repetitions and progress to the more difficult exercises over 6-8 weeks. All exercises should be completed with control and proper form. Ideally, some kind of exercise should be performed daily, as recommended below.

EXERCISES:

- 20-30 minutes of cardio exercises **at least** 3 times and ideally 5 times per week. These should be low-impact, straight-line activities, i.e. elliptical trainer, cross-country skiing, biking, swimming, walking, hiking or skating
- 15-20 minutes of strengthening exercises 3-5 times/week (please see below for some recommended exercises)
- An Electric Muscle Stimulator (EMS) is recommended on the injured leg for many of the strengthening exercises

IMPORTANT: If you have increased knee pain or swelling after these exercises, decrease the number of times you do each exercise, or choose an exercise that works better for you. After you exercise apply an ice pack, a compression bandage and elevate your leg for 20-30 minutes, to reduce any pain and swelling. If you have difficulty completing your pre-operative exercise program please see your physiotherapist.

1. Strengthening Exercises:

☐ **Quadriceps Contraction** - In sitting with your knee straight and leg supported, tighten the thigh muscle to hold the knee straight. Avoid lifting your leg from the hip. Perform 5 -10 times holding each contraction for 5 secs. Progress to 30 times holding each contraction for 10 secs, resting for 5 secs in between reps. The use of EMS is recommended for this exercise.



☐ **Straight Leg Raises** - In the position shown, tighten your thigh muscle while keeping your knee straight and lift your leg 3-5 cm. Perform exercise 5 -10 times holding each contraction for 5 secs. Progress to 30 times, holding each contraction for 5-10 secs. The use of EMS is recommended for this exercise.



☐ **Hip Adduction** - In lying with your knees bent as shown, squeeze a soft ball or a pillow between your knees. Perform exercise 5 -10 times holding each contraction for 5 seconds. Progress to 30 times, holding each contraction for 10-15 secs, resting for 5 secs between reps.



□ **Calf Raises - Both legs:** Start with feet shoulder width apart and toes pointed straight ahead, and raise up onto your toes. Start with one set of 10, holding each raise for 5 secs. Increase the number of reps up to 30 with 5 sec hold. Start by using support at a wall or table and progress to no support as able.



□ **Calf Raises - Single leg:** Start on one leg with toes pointed straight ahead, and raise up onto your toes. Start with one set of 10, holding each raise for 5 secs. Increase the number of reps up to 30 with 5 sec hold. Start by using support at a wall or table and progress to no support as able



□ **Gluteals** - In lying with your knees bent and your arms by your sides, squeeze your buttocks and lift up to create a bridge. Keep equal weight on each leg and straight alignment from your shoulders to your knees. Be careful not to push down on your neck or shoulders – use your buttocks to do the work. Start with one set of 10, holding each lift for 5 secs. Increase the number of reps as your strength increases. Once you can complete 20 reps holding for 10 sec each, progress to single leg bridges.



□ **Hamstrings** - In sitting, place a resistance band around your ankle and also have it attached to a chair or table leg in front of you. Bend your knee backwards slowly against the resistance of the band using the muscles under your thigh. Start with 1 set of 10 reps and increase to 3 sets of 15 reps.



□ **Squats (Quadriceps)** - Slowly squat with equal weight on each leg. Bend your knees from 0° to a maximum of 90° of flexion, making sure your knees do not move beyond your toes. Start with one set of 10, holding each squat for 5 secs and increase the number of reps as your strength increases, up to 30 reps x 15 secs hold. EMS can be used with this exercise with the 'contraction' time at least double the 'rest' time.



☐ **Single leg squats** - Standing on one leg, slowly squat bending your knee from 0° to a maximum of 90° , making sure your knee does not move beyond your toes. Start with one set of 10, holding each squat for 5 secs and increase the number of reps as your strength increases, up to 30 reps x 15 secs hold.



2. Balance and Proprioception Exercises:

☐ **Single leg stance** (eyes open, eyes closed)

☐ **Double leg squats on an unstable surface** (thick carpet, foam block, camping mattress)

☐ **Single leg stance on an unstable surface** (thick carpet, foam block, camping mattress)



☐ **Single leg squats on trampoline** - Standing on one leg, slowly squat bending your knee from 0° to a maximum of 90° , making sure your knee does not move beyond your toes. Start with one set of 10, holding each squat for 5 secs and increase the number of reps as your strength increases, up to 30 reps x 15 secs hold.



☐ **Squats on a BOSU** - Slowly squat with equal weight on each leg. Bend your knees from 0° to a maximum of 90° of flexion, making sure your knees do not move beyond your toes. Start with one set of 10, holding each squat for 5 secs and increase the number of reps as your strength increases, up to 30 reps x 15 secs hold.



☐ **Lunges on a BOSU** – Step forward/back and lunge as shown. Control the descent ensuring your knee that is forward does not move beyond your toes. Start with 1 set of 10, holding each lunge for 5 secs. Increase the number of reps as your strength increases up to 3 sets of 10.



3. Stretching Exercises:

☐ **Calf Stretch** - Standing in front of a wall in the position shown. Lean forward until you feel a stretch in your calf. Hold each stretch for at least 30 seconds and repeat 4 times. Do exercise with back leg straight and again with back leg slightly bent.

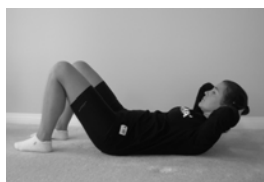


☐ **Hamstring Stretch** - In lying, place a towel or belt around your foot and bring your leg up until a stretch is felt at the back of the thigh. Hold each stretch for at least 30 seconds and repeat 4 times.



4. Core Strengthening Exercises:

☐ **Abdominal and core** - some exercise ideas include planks, crunches, extensions and also bridging with **legs** on physio ball and bridging with **back** on physio ball.



5. Upper body Strengthening

You will be using crutches for at least a portion of your recovery. Strengthening will help you be more mobile, with less discomfort to your upper body. Some exercise ideas include: push ups, dips, triceps curls, seated rows and chest press. We suggest you review these exercises with your physiotherapist or a trainer to make sure you are doing them correctly.



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Opioid Medication: Pain Control after Surgery

What are my options for safe and effective pain control?

Managing your pain after surgery is important. Combination therapy (using different medications together) along with education can offer the best pain relief. Some of these medications work via different pathways and can be used together. After surgery a moderate amount of pain is a normal and expected part of the process. Pain medications help you function better and cope with the amount of pain you are experiencing, but **these medications will not eliminate your pain entirely.**

Talk to your surgeon about medication options, which can include both prescription strength and over the counter drugs. These medications include:

- **Non-steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs)** can be used to decrease swelling and fever, and to treat mild to moderate pain. (These can be prescription or over-the-counter medications, such as Naprosyn, naproxen: *Aleve*, ibuprofen: *Advil*, *Motrin*).
- **Acetaminophen** is used to decrease mild to moderate pain and fever. (These are over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol or Paracetamol).
- **Local anesthetics** which can be injected near a set of nerves (nerve block) or the surgery wound site. (This option is performed immediately after your surgery at the hospital).
- **Opioids** are used to decrease severe pain. (These are prescription medications such as Morphine, Tramacet, Percocet, OxyContin, Vicodin or Tylenol #3 which contains codeine).
- **Nerve pain medication** used to prevent nerve pain and irritation. (These are prescription medications such as Lyrica and Neurontin).

When should I take pain medication?

The goal is to keep you moving and control your pain. In general, the most painful time is the first 72 hours (3 days) after surgery. The amount of pain usually decreases after these first few days. If your pain increases or does not decrease with medication you should contact your surgeon. Call our office at 403-760-2897 (during regular business hours 8am-4pm Monday to Friday), or the Banff Mineral Springs Hospital at 403-762-2222 (outside of business hours).

Some medication is taken on a schedule (for example, every 4-6 hours) and other medications can be taken when you feel pain. Here is a useful guide:

- I am moving slowly and either have no pain or only a little pain = I don't need any medication.
- I am feeling some pain and having trouble moving around = I could use some over-the-counter medication. (For example ibuprofen: *Advil/Motrin* or acetaminophen: *Tylenol*).
- I am thinking about my pain all the time and it is painful for me to move = I should take some stronger medication. (For example a prescription medication such as Morphine, Percocet or Tramacet).

It usually takes 25-40 minutes for the medications to start working effectively so you should take your medication before your pain becomes severe or you are unable to move because of the pain.

Are there ways to reduce my pain besides medication?

Yes! You can do a number of things to help decrease your pain (*continued on next page*)

- Use ice packs or cold therapy to decrease swelling and pain.
- Rest for the majority of time for the first few days after surgery.

- Elevate and support your surgical limb as shown on your rehabilitation exercise protocol.
- Keep moving after the first few days, without over doing it.
- Distraction such as watching movies, listening to music, playing games, or talking to friends and family, has been shown to help reduce pain after surgery.

Why are opioids used?

Opioids are strong medications and when used properly, they can help to relieve short-term pain like the pain experienced after surgery. When opioids are used improperly, they can cause dependence or addiction, overdose and death.

How to use your prescribed opioid medication.

If you have been prescribed an opioid medication, such as Percocet or Tramacet, it should:

- **Only** be taken as prescribed
- **Never** be used by someone for whom it was not prescribed
- **Never** be taken with alcohol or other medications (except as prescribed).
- **Never** to be used while driving or operating machinery

Keep your medication safe to help prevent use by others by:

- **Never** sharing your medication with anyone else. (Sharing opioid medication is illegal and may also cause serious harm or death to the other person).
- **Keeping track** of the number of pills remaining in the package
- **Storing** opioids in a safe and secure place, out of the reach of children and teenagers

Unused portions of opioid medicine should always be:

- Kept out of sight of children and pets
- Stored in a safe place to prevent theft, problematic use or accidental exposure
- **Returned to the pharmacy** for safe disposal when no longer needed or expired. Medications should never be thrown in the trash or flushed down the toilet.
- This will prevent the possibility of illegal use and protect the environment from contamination.

Opioid Side Effects

Short-term side effects	Long-term side effects
Drowsiness	Increased tolerance
Decreased reaction time, which can impair driving and decision-making	Substance use disorder or dependence (addiction)
Constipation	Liver damage
Impotence in men	Infertility in women
Nausea and vomiting	Worsening pain
Difficulty breathing, which can lead to or worsen sleep apnea	Life-threatening withdrawal symptoms in babies born to mothers taking opioids
Euphoria (feeling high)	Overdose
Headaches, dizziness and confusion, which can lead to falls or fractures	

Anyone who takes prescription opioids can become addicted.

If you take opioid medications for more than a few weeks, your body becomes used to that dose. This physical dependence means you may experience withdrawal symptoms if you stop taking the drug.

Withdrawal symptoms include: insomnia, anxiety, racing heartbeat, and headaches. Withdrawal symptoms can be managed by gradually decreasing your medication dose with advice from a health care provider.

**Signs of opioid overdose include small pupils, trouble breathing and unconsciousness.
Call 911 immediately if you think you or a family member took too much pain medication.**



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Post-Operative Concerns

Contact us if you have any concerns after your surgery

For Surgery performed at Banff Mineral Springs Hospital (Banff)

- ✓ During regular business hours - 8 am to 4 pm, Monday to Friday (closed Statutory Holidays):

403-760-2897 Ext 1

*Note: Call our office and **not** the hospital. If you get a voice mail response, please leave a detailed message, our office staff will call you back as soon as they are able.*

- ✓ Weekends and after regular hours:

If you have any urgent concerns **after** regular business hours that cannot wait please call the Mineral Springs Hospital at 403-762-2222 and ask for Acute Care.

- ✓ Anytime:

Health Link (811) will connect you to a nurse 24hrs a day who is able to give advice.

For surgery performed at other locations:

- ✓ Golden and District General Hospital (Golden): 250-344-5271
- ✓ Hinton Healthcare Centre (Hinton): 780-817-5019
- ✓ Elk Valley Hospital (Ferne): 250-423-4453

Common Concerns

1. **Uncontrolled pain**, if the prescribed painkiller (Tylenol #3, Tramacet or Percocet) is not controlling your pain, you may also take ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) up to 600 mg every 6 hours in addition to the prescribed medication. Try not to take ibuprofen on an empty stomach. However, if you have already been prescribed Naproxen (Naprosyn), do not take ibuprofen at the same time. Other actions such as loosening the tensor bandage, elevating the leg and ice packs can also help.
2. **Calf, foot and ankle pain and swelling** within the first 2 weeks after knee surgery is common. If you have calf pain and swelling you should loosen the tensor bandage around your knee and also elevate your leg so that your knee and ankle are above your heart. (Please see the Cold Therapy and Elevation picture on the first page of your rehabilitation protocol). If this does not improve the pain and swelling, please contact us. *If the pain and swelling is associated with sudden chest pain and/or shortness of breath immediately go to the nearest emergency department.*
3. **Swelling and redness of the shin** after ACL or other knee ligament surgery is not uncommon. Contact us only if the redness extends into the surgical incision sites or if there is persistent drainage of fluid (yellowish or cloudy fluid) after removing your bandage at the recommended time.

4. **Skin redness above or below the bandages**, when you get home from the hospital, you may notice that the skin is red above or below the bandage. The most likely cause of this is the surgical preparation solution that was used to clean your skin before the operation. This solution has a red dye in it so if you are concerned that the redness may be caused by an infection, try washing that area with soap and water to see if it comes off. If your leg is still red and/or hot to touch after you have washed the area, then you should go to your local doctor or hospital to be assessed.
5. A **fever** is not uncommon within the first 48 hours after surgery. Call us only if the fever continues more than 2 days after surgery and is associated with a feeling of general unwellness. Fevers occurring within the first 48 hours post-operatively can be managed with Tylenol and deep breathing exercises.
6. A small amount of **bleeding** through the bandage can occur within the first 48 hours after surgery. Call the office or hospital if the bandage becomes saturated with blood, or if bleeding continues after removing the bandage at the recommended time.
7. **Swelling of the hand** is common after shoulder and elbow surgery. This swelling can be prevented or reduced by frequent pumping of the fingers (or squeezing a rubber or foam ball) and by taking your arm out of the sling and fully straightening your elbow (as when doing a pendulum exercise).
8. For post-operative **nausea and vomiting** if you can tolerate the pain, try stopping your prescribed painkiller, or take gravol (can be purchased over the counter in pill and suppository form). Sometimes taking the painkiller with food will help. Call us if you have uncontrolled vomiting.
9. Occasionally, an itchy, red, blotchy **skin rash** can occur with the use of ice packs or a cold therapy unit. This is not an infection but is a skin reaction to the cold. This can happen when cold is used for long periods of time, even when a cloth is used to protect the skin. If this happens, stop using the cold therapy until the rash settles down (this may take hours or even a day or two). When you start using cold therapy again, apply it intermittently (20 minutes on, then 20 minutes off).
10. After ACL surgery using your **hamstring tendons**, it is not uncommon to strain or pull the hamstring muscle in the first 6-weeks after surgery. This may occur while pulling on your socks or shoes, or bending over to pick something up. You may feel a sudden painful “pop” in the back of your knee or lower thigh. This does not mean that you have torn your ACL graft and the pain will settle down within a few days. You may also notice some bruising or swelling at the back of your thigh. However, if the pain is not improving after a few days, or is associated with a significant increase in knee swelling, please call our office and not the hospital, as this concern can wait until regular office hours.
11. When you remove your bandage for the first time, you may notice a clear string that looks like fishing line sticking out of the skin near the incision(s). This is a **biodegradable stitch or suture** that is used to close the skin incision. It will eventually fall off. However, you may snip these clear strings off at the level of the skin as early as 2 weeks after surgery, or you can wait to have this done by your surgeon at your first follow-up appointment. After removing your bandage, avoid the temptation to touch your healing incisions as your own hands are the most common source of bacteria which can cause wound infections.
12. **Steri-strips** are white strips of tape that are used to reinforce the stitching of the skin incisions. You may peel these strips of tape off by yourself 2-weeks after surgery, by which time the incision should be healed.



Banff Sport Medicine

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Cold Therapy Information

What is Cold Therapy?

Cold therapy is the use of ice or cold to reduce pain, inflammation, swelling and spasm from an injury or after surgery. Cold therapy can be applied with a bag of ice, an ice pack, gel pack, cold compress or by using a specialized Cold Therapy Unit.

Cold therapy is used as part of rehabilitation after knee, shoulder and ankle surgeries, such as arthroscopy, anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) reconstruction, shoulder reconstruction or rotator cuff repair.¹

What does it do?

Cold therapy slows down the blood flow to an injured area. Research has shown that cold therapy decreases pain, inflammation, swelling, blood loss, and medication use after surgery.²

What do we recommend?

After your surgery we recommend that you use cold therapy to decrease pain and to improve your recovery. We also recommend that you use cold therapy after therapy and exercise sessions for the first 3 months after surgery.

To reduce swelling and inflammation, patients get the best results using a Cold Therapy Unit.³ This type of cold therapy is the safest and most convenient to apply. Some names of these Cold Therapy Units are Aircast Cryo/Cuff™, DonJoy Iceman®, Ossur Cold Rush™ and Polarcare Kodiak®.

How often should I use cold therapy?

You should use cold therapy a **minimum** of 5 times per day for 20 minutes each time for the first 5-7 days after surgery. It is essential that you protect your skin from the cold therapy by using a cloth or towel to prevent skin injury.

If you are using a Cold Therapy Unit it is possible to safely keep the cold pad on for much longer periods of time (up to 5 hours). To get the best results and prevent skin injury, you should always carefully follow the specific Cold Therapy Unit instructions.

Where can I buy a cold therapy unit?

You can order a Cold Therapy Unit, complete with a knee or shoulder pad, through our website (<https://banffsportmed.ca/shop/>). Alternatively, you can purchase a Cold Therapy Unit from your local healthcare provider or from an online health supply store. For portable use you can purchase a battery pack, which allows you to use your Cold Therapy Unit without an electrical outlet. We recommend that you buy your Cold Therapy Unit at least a week before your surgery to make sure that you have it delivered in time.

¹ Raynor MC, Pietrobon R, Guller U, Higgins LD. Cryotherapy after ACL reconstruction: a meta-analysis. J Knee Surg. 2005 Apr;18(2):123-9.

² Wilke B, Weiner RD. Postoperative cryotherapy: risks versus benefits of continuous-flow cryotherapy units. Clin Podiatr Med Surg. 2003 Apr;20(2):307-22.

³ Barber FA. A comparison of crushed ice and continuous flow cold therapy. Am J Knee Surg. 2000 Spring;13(2):97-101;



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Patient Services

Questionnaires

We aim to provide excellent post-operative care, as such we ask you to come back for appointments for up to 2-years after your surgery.

In addition to these visits, you may be asked to complete questionnaires, these provide the Surgeon with information regarding your overall function, your ability to participate in recreational or sporting activities, and your social and emotional well-being, both before and after surgery. From each questionnaire a score is generated reflecting your current level of function. Using these scores, the Surgeon can assess your recovery progress.

These questionnaires will be provided to you via an email with a link to a secure site to complete the questionnaire electronically before your appointment.

Online Shop

Our Online Shop (<https://banffsportmed.ca/shop/>) offers medical aids for purchase to help with your recovery and rehabilitation. You may order cold therapy unit, range of motion (ROM) and off-the-shelf braces, electric muscle stimulator (EMS) units, and exercise kits from our site. Purchases are made through PayPal or via a secure credit/debit transaction.

The electronic receipt received through the website may be used to submit for insurance claims.

Prescriptions required for Cold Therapy Units will be provided to you by our office.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

You can consult our Frequently Asked Questions page on our website (<https://banffsportmed.ca/faq/>) to find answers to questions that are common to many patients in your situation. Answers include what your surgery will involve, how to manage your pain, when you can drive after surgery, how long you should avoid contact with water at the site of your surgical incision, common physical effects after surgery, and what to do if you require medical attention. If your question is not answered on the FAQ page, please contact your surgeon's medical office assistant with your question by phone or email for more information.