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KNEE ARTHROSCOPY

The arthroscope is a fibre-optic telescope that can be inserted into a joint to evaluate and treat a number of conditions. A camera is attached to the arthroscope and the picture is visualized on a TV monitor.

Arthroscopy is useful in evaluating and treating the following conditions

1. Torn Meniscus: The cartilage is trimmed to a stable rim is repaired
2. Torn surface (articular) cartilage: Debride the cartilage
3. Removal of loose bodies (cartilage or bone that has broken off) and cysts)
4. Reconstruction of the Anterior Cruciate ligament
5. Patello-femoral (knee-cap) disorders
6. Washout of infected knees
7. General diagnostic purposes

Investigations

A routine X-Ray of the knee which includes a standing weight-bearing view
An MRI scan which looks at the cartilages and soft tissues & Meniscal Cartilage Tears

How to prepare for Arthroscopy of the knee

Please stop taking Aspirin and Anti-inflammatories 5 days prior to your surgery
If pain medication is required use Panadol / Panadine or Panadine Forte.
You will be admitted on the day of surgery and need to remain fasted for 6 hours prior
The limb undergoing the procedure will be marked and identified prior to the anaesthetic
The Arthroscope is introduced through a small (size of a pen) incision on the outer side of the knee.
A second incision on the inner side of the knee is made to introduce the instruments that allow examination of the joint and treatment of the problem.

Post-operative recovery

A bandage will be around the operated knee.
Pain medication will be provided and should be taken as directed
You can remove the bandage in 24 hours

It is normal for the knee to swell after the surgery.
Elevating the leg when you are seated and placing Ice-Packs on the knee
You are able to drive and return to work when comfortable unless otherwise instructed
Make an appointment 7-10 days after surgery and stitches are removed.

Risks specifically related to the surgery.

Postoperative bleeding
Deep Vein Thrombosis
Infection
Stiffness

Numbness to part of the skin near the incisions
Injury to vessels, nerves and a chronic pain syndrome

Do I need crutches

Usually not required (Unless having Anterior Cruciate Ligament Reconstruction)

When can I get the knee wet

After 24 hrs remove the bandage and apply waterproof dressing

When can I drive

After 24 hrs if the knee is comfortable

When can I return to work

When the knee feels reasonably comfortable

When can I swim

After removal of the stitches

How long will my knee take to recover

Depending on the findings and surgery usually 4 to 6 weeks following the surgery.