



**Columbia University
Shoulder, Elbow and
Sports Medicine Service**

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Frequently Asked Questions Patients Often Have Following Knee Surgery (ACL reconstruction)

1. How long will I have to use crutches?

ACL reconstruction: 2 weeks
ACL reconstruction with meniscal repair: 4 weeks

2. How long do I have to wear the knee brace?

You will wear the brace for 4 weeks total
The brace must remain locked in extension for weight-bearing until you regain full use of your quadriceps (thigh muscles).
Once this is achieved, with therapy, it may be unlocked for walking.

3. Do I have to wear the brace at all times?

You **MUST** wear the brace at all times locked in extension to sleep for the full 4 weeks following surgery.

The use of the brace will be gradually weaned when instructed by your doctor (when comfortable not wearing it indoors, you may remove it for outdoor use as well).

4. When will I start physical therapy and for how long will I attend?

You will start within the week of your surgery and will continue to have supervised therapy for a minimum of 6 months.

5. When will my first follow-up appointment be and how often will I need to see the doctor?

Your first follow-up appointment will be within 1-2 weeks after surgery. Your doctor will inform you of how frequently he will need to see you, depending on your progress in physical therapy. You will have an xray of your knee during your second post-op visit.

6. When can I drive?

Right knee-when you have been instructed to remove your brace and have regained full use of your leg and you are no longer taking narcotic pain pills. Left knee-as soon as you are no longer taking narcotic pain pills.

7. When can I play sports again?

You will not be allowed to play full contact sports until 6 months after surgery.

For all questions regarding the care of your sling (adjusting it, cleaning it, etc.) or the use of your cryocuff, you may contact East Coast Orthotics at 631-254-5577 and they will be happy to help you.