



Knee Injury

Acute (recent or fresh) injury to the knee is treated initially by controlling the pain and swelling. Use of crutches during this time is often helpful to keep the weight off of the involved leg, but is often symptom driven. Unless one is instructed otherwise, ***as in the case of a fracture or suspected fracture***, use the crutches for comfort only. Some kind of a wrap or knee immobilizer may also be used to stabilize the injured knee.

Ice is applied for 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off throughout most of the day for the first 2-3 days, make sure you keep a thin layer of clothing between you and the ice. After that time, it is OK to switch to heat. Soak the leg in warm water and allow the knee to bend and straighten. ***Do not do this if you are still unable to bear weight and there might be a fracture.***

During this time, the use of an anti-inflammatory medication is also helpful but not essential. Motrin (Ibuprofen and Advil are the same) in doses of 600 mg 3 times a day for about 5-7 days is the suggested dose. ***Those with aspirin allergy, severe asthma, and ulcers, bleeding disorders or those who take blood thinners (such as Coumadin or Plavix) should not take these medications.*** Any stomach upset during this time is also a reason to stop these medicines immediately.

An MRI test may be ordered to further evaluate the extent of injury to the soft tissues which cannot be seen on x-rays. Often physical therapy is helpful to restore motion, strength and balance. A brace can be provided to supplement your stability in the short term to help you get around easier. Return to work, school and sports will be determined on an individual basis depending on severity of injury and type of activity.

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