



ChildrensHospitalLosAngeles

International Leader in Pediatrics

Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) Tear Pre-operative Care

What to expect before surgery:

Crutches: At this point, surgery was recommended to repair your ACL. If you have not ever used or do not have crutches, we will have the physical therapist show you how to use crutches and give you a pair. Please bring the crutches with you the day of surgery.

Bledsoe Brace: Today you will receive a brace specific for this type of surgery. It is very important that you bring this brace on the day of surgery. You will be wearing this brace for ALL walking/crutching and for sleeping for the first 6 weeks after surgery. At your 2 week post-surgery visit, we will increase the range of motion on the brace. Someone will come down today and fit you for the brace today.

Physical Therapy: Physical therapy is very important to how you will recovery after surgery and when you are able to return to sports. We will submit a prescription for physical therapy for authorization with your insurance at the same time we submit the surgery for authorization. This authorization process takes time for your insurance to review. If you don't receive a phone call within 1 week after surgery to schedule your first physical therapy appointment then you need to call the orthopaedic clinic. The goal is to have at least one physical therapy appointment before seeing the doctor at your first follow-up visit after surgery, at approximately 2 weeks.

Your insurance decides where you go to physical therapy. If you go to physical therapy at another clinic then we have protocol specific for the surgery that you can take to the therapists so they know exactly what you need to be accomplishing every week.

Surgery: Usually the surgery is done as an outpatient, meaning you go home the same day. It usually takes between 2-3 hours for the surgery. The child will be put to sleep for surgery and usually don't remember anything from the actual surgery. Some of the anesthesiologists will offer to enhance pain control with local blocks and catheters. They will help you to make this decision the morning of surgery. Someone will call you the day before surgery between 4-7 p.m. to tell you what time and where to go on the day of surgery. It is important not to eat or drink anything after midnight the day of surgery. If you take medications, please use only a small sip of water to swallow your medications.

Activity: Most of the time, the doctor recommends not participating in any sports or activities until after surgery. If you do participate in sports on an injured knee you are putting your knee at more risk for damage.