Patient Information Leaflet:

ACL Reconstruction

Introduction

This leaflet provides information about ACL (Anterior Cruciate Ligament) reconstruction, a surgical procedure to repair a torn ACL. It is designed to help you understand the procedure, what to expect before, during and after surgery, and potential complications.

The Procedure

ACL reconstruction is a surgical procedure to replace a torn ACL with a graft taken from another part of your body. Common graft options include the hamstring tendon or a bone-patellar tendon graft. In some cases, additional procedures such as meniscus repair or lateral tenodesis (to improve stability) may be performed at the same time.

Anaesthesia

Most ACL reconstructions are performed under spinal anaesthesia, where the lower part of your body is numbed. You will be awake during the surgery but will not feel any pain.

Thromboprophylaxis

Thromboprophylaxis is usually not required for ACL reconstruction, but it will be discussed with you on an individual basis.

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Before Surgery

- You may need to undergo blood tests and other investigations.
- **You will meet with an anaesthetist for a pre-assessment appointment. It is important to bring all your medications to this appointment.**
- You may need to stop taking certain medications before surgery.
- You will be given specific instructions about fasting before surgery.
- It is important to inform your surgeon about any allergies or medical conditions.

The Operation

The surgery typically takes about 1-2 hours. You will be taken to the recovery room immediately after the surgery.

After Surgery

- You will be encouraged to move your knee as soon as possible to prevent stiffness.
- Pain management will be provided.
- You can expect to stay in hospital for approximately 1 day.
- Physical therapy will be essential for your recovery.
- A knee brace may be used after surgery, especially if a meniscal repair has been performed.

Potential Complications

- Infection
- Stiffness
- Blood clots
- Nerve damage
- Knee instability
- Re-rupture of the ACL

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Rehabilitation

Post-operative rehabilitation is crucial for a successful outcome. Your surgeon and physiotherapist will provide specific instructions. It typically involves a progressive program of exercises to regain strength, flexibility, and stability.

Return to Sport

Return to sport is usually possible around 9-12 months after surgery, although this can vary depending on individual factors and the type of sport.

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Conclusion

This leaflet provides general information about ACL reconstruction. It is essential to discuss your specific situation with your surgeon. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions you may have.

Note: This leaflet is for informational purposes only and should not replace professional medical advice.

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