Exercises after Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) Surgery

Start these exercises the day of your surgery, after your nerve block has worn off. Be sure to start these exercises by the day after your surgery.

- **Ankle Pumps**
  Move your foot up and down as if pushing down or letting up on a gas pedal in a car.
  Repeat this exercise throughout the day.

- **Quad Sets**
  Lie on your back with your legs straight and toes pointed toward the ceiling. Tighten your thigh muscles and push your knee down to the bed. Hold for 5 seconds and release.
  Do this exercise at different times during the day. You should do this exercise a total of 100 times each day.
- **Knee Push (Quad sets with towel roll)**
  
  Put a small towel roll under your ankle and push your knee down into the bed. Work on getting your knee straight.

  Do this exercise at different times during the day. You should do this exercise a total of 100 times each day.

  ![Knee Push Diagram](image)

- **Straight Leg Raise**

  Lift your surgery leg toward the ceiling while keeping your knee straight. Bend the opposite knee.

  Do this exercise at different times during the day. You should do this exercise a total of 200 times each day.

  ![Straight Leg Raise Diagram](image)

- **Knee Bending**

  Sit in a chair and let your knee gently bend. You may cross your leg over your surgery leg at the ankle to help bend, but do not force the bend in the first week after surgery. The goal is to bend the knee 80 to 90 degrees.

  Do this exercise 3 times each day for 5 to 10 bends.

  ![Knee Bending Diagram](image)
Begin this exercise the first day after surgery. This position will help your knee heal in a straight position.

- Lie on your stomach with your legs straight out over the edge of the bed. Allow gravity to pull your leg straight toward the floor. Cross your one leg over your surgery leg and push down toward the floor to straighten your knee. Also, practice bending your knee in this position.

Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu.