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Quadriceps Tendon Repair Surgery - A Patient Guide

What Operation Has Been Performed?

The torn tendon has been reattached to either the patella (knee cap) or the other portion of the tendon. This is done with very strong sutures using a robust suture technique.

Day of Operation

Usually, this is a day case procedure. You will wake up with a brace on your leg and a bandage on your knee. Once you have been assessed by a physiotherapist and are safe to walk and have eaten and passed water, and your pain is manageable, you can go home.

Day of the Operation at Home

You will experience some discomfort and should take pain killers, such as Codeine with Diclofenac. These should be taken regularly (3-4 times/day) especially before physiotherapy or exercise sessions. There may be some swelling in the knee and if so, place ice (or frozen vegetables) on the knee for 10 minutes in every hour, especially before and after physiotherapy or exercise sessions.

Day after the Operation, Bandage, Dressings and Showering

48 hours after the operation, you can remove the bandage and wool around the knee yourself. You will need to remove the brace first, keeping the knee within the range of motion set on the brace. Underneath will be a waterproof dressing. Keep this dry for 3 whole days after the operation. On the 4th day you can have a shower, taking care not to soak the dressings although they can get wet. Avoid a bath until Mr Gordon has seen you in clinic at 10 days to 2 weeks to review your wound.

Leg Brace and Weight Bearing Status

You will wake up with a long brace on your leg and a bandage around your knee. The brace will restrict your knee bend to within the range of stability of the repair. This is tested during surgery. You are encouraged to move the knee within this range. The brace should be worn 24 hours a day, but can be removed for washing. Over time (normally 6 weeks), Mr Gordon will assess your knee and may gradually increase the range of movement set on the brace. This will be done in clinic by Mr Gordon. You can fully weight bear with crutches immediately after surgery and throughout your rehabilitation.

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Physiotherapy and Exercise

You can place your full weight through the leg and bend and straighten the knee within the range set by the brace. This movement should start as soon as you are comfortable, on the day of surgery. More formal exercises or dedicated physiotherapy can commence between 1 and 3 days after the operation.

Out Patient Visits to see Mr Gordon

2 weeks – to assess wound healing, then every 2 weeks to adjust brace until brace is removed (usually 6 weeks)

6 weeks – to assess pain, swelling, muscle bulk and range of motion

12 weeks – to assess pain, swelling, muscle bulk and range of motion and to advise on increasing activity level

4-6 months – advise on increasing activity level

Driving

You need to be able to control the vehicle in an emergency. Can you stamp your foot down on the ground? For left sided surgery and no clutch is required, driving is probably safe after a few days post operatively. For right sided surgery, driving is probably safe at 6 to 8 weeks post operatively. This will be discussed in clinic at the 6 week stage. You should check with your insurance company.