

Stem Cell Transplant Lower Extremity Procedure

Home Care Instructions

- Activity** The goal is to allow the stem cells to attach and then to protect them while they differentiate into cartilage. For this reason, you'll be asked to keep the joint as still as possible for 30-60 minutes after the procedure. Do not take a bath for three days, but a shower 12 hours after the procedure is fine.
- 1st – 3rd Day:** For the first day, you should limit activity on the joint. If you have post-op soreness this may be easy to do, as you may have a natural limp or “antalgic” gait (your body does this to reduce pressure on the area to allow healing). If you don't have this, then simply, naturally taking a bit of weight off this area as you walk is a good idea this first day. Avoid all contact sports as well as jogging, running, or sports that involve impact on that joint.
- 4th Day – 2nd Week:** You can start to walk normally, no more than 30-60 minutes a day. Avoid all contact sports as well as jogging, running, or sports that involve impact on that joint. Bike riding is fine as are stationary bikes (no up/downs), elliptical machines, and swimming (no breast stroke).
- 3rd-6th Week:** Avoid all contact sports as well as jogging, running, or sports that involve impact on that joint. You can walk as much as you like. Bike riding is fine, as are stationary bikes, elliptical machine, and swimming.
- After the 6th Week:** Start integrating back all desired activities, adding back 20% per week. For example, if you were used to running 10 miles a week, you would start at 2 miles a week, then the next week add back another 2 miles, and so on...
- Medications** You can't take anti-inflammatory drugs such as Motrin, Aleve, Ibuprofen, or similar NSAIDs. These need to be avoided for 6-12 weeks after the procedure. In addition, any other drugs you have been asked to avoid, should also be stopped for the same time period. Please review the Medication Restriction sheet sent previously. Most statin cholesterol lowering drugs will move stem cells toward producing bone, which is not what we want here, so these need to be avoided for 6-12 weeks. Steroid medications (such as steroid based asthma inhalers, oral steroids, or steroid injections into the joint or another joint) will dramatically impair stem cell function, so these are to be avoided as well.
- Pain** If you have pain from the procedure, this should resolve within the first 1-3 weeks. If it does not, contact your clinic doctor. Tylenol is acceptable to take.
- Alcohol** Alcohol can have profound negative impacts on stem cell function, so this should be avoided for the same 6-12 weeks. A glass of red wine or white wine with dinner is not a problem, but more than that could pose a risk to the cells.
- Brace** You are to wear your brace for 4 weeks when weight-bearing (standing or walking). You do not have to sleep in it or wear it when sedentary.
- Emergency** Notify the office if you develop a fever >101°F, with unusual increase in pain, redness, and warmth. Report any pus or unusual drainage to our office immediately. It could be a concern if your incisions swell or have drainage. If you encounter any problems, please call our office.

**** If you feel chest pain or shortness of breath, please go to the nearest ER for evaluation. Do not call the office or wait for an appointment; although extremely rare, this could be a blood clot in the lungs. ****