



## Methods to Decrease Swelling

### ROSENBERG COOLEY METCALF

THE ORTHOPEDIC CLINIC AT PARK CITY

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- MODIFIED REST:** Avoid activities that promote increased swelling in the knee and lower leg. It is best to avoid sitting or standing for long periods of time (over 10-15 minutes).
- ICE:** Ice the knee intermittently during the day for 20-30 minutes. Allow 2 hours to elapse between each icing session. One recommended method is to use the large bags of frozen peas. Place one bag on the top of the knee and one under the knee for 20-30 minutes. Then re-freeze the bags to use again. NOTE: Once re-frozen, do not consume. **Caution:** Freezer ice packs and peas can be excessively cold at first. Place a wet towel between your leg and the pack to avoid frost nip.
- COMPRESSION:**
- 1) Use a full-length ted hose to provide compression for the lower limb or
  - 2) Place an Ace wrap from the base of the calf to the mid thigh.
- ELEVATION:** Keep the lower limb elevated to avoid pooling of fluids in the knee and lower leg.
- EXERCISES:**
- 1) Ankle Pumps:  
Actively move the ankle up and down, in and out, and in circles. Use a bath towel to add resistance. Hold the towel with one end in each hand and the middle of the towel around the ball of the foot. This should be done every hour.
  - 2) Quad Sets:  
In a sitting position with the leg straight, slowly tighten the muscles in the thigh. Hold the contraction for 5 seconds then rest 3 seconds. Repeat 10 times per hour.
  - 3) Straight Leg Raises:  
In a sitting position with the leg straight, tighten the thigh muscles gradually. Slowly lift the leg up and hold for 3 seconds. Lower the leg back down and relax the thigh. Begin with 3 sets of 10 repetitions 3 times per day. Ankle weights or heavy boots can be added for increased resistance.
  - 4) Cycling:  
Begin stationary biking with light resistance for approximately 10 minutes. Increase time and resistance gradually as tolerated.
- MEDICATIONS:** Anti-inflammatory medicine (Diclofenac/Voltaren or Ibuprofen/Motrin) as prescribed by your physician.

