

Introduction

Arthroscopy is the use of a small fiber-optic tube called arthroscope, to visualize and examine the interior condition of a joint. Arthroscopy is commonly used in the knee, ankle and shoulder joints. The advantages of arthroscopy assisted surgery are safe, small wound and speedy recovery.

The Operation / Procedure

Surgeon will make a few small incisions on patient's skin and insert pen-sized instruments into the joint. Together with the use of other devices, e.g. surgical knife, television camera etc, the surgeon could examine, manipulate or repair the internal structure of the joint.

Preoperative Preparation

1. Admit 1 day before or on same day of this “elective” operation.
2. Anesthetic assessment before operation. Inform your doctors about drug allergy, regular medications or other medical conditions.
3. Body check e.g. blood test, x-ray, urinalysis, electrocardiogram etc.
4. Pre-operative bath and enema.
5. Keep fast for 6 to 8 hours before operation.
6. Empty bladder and change to operation clothes before transfer to operating room.
7. A written consent is required.
8. Pre-medication, antibiotic prophylaxis intravenous line may be required. Anesthetist may be consulted if necessary and decide the mode of anesthesia such as general, regional or spinal anesthesia.

Postoperative Instruction**A. General**

1. Mild throat discomfort or pain because of intubation.
2. Mild discomfort or pain over the operation site. Inform nurse or doctor if pain severe.
3. Nausea or vomiting are common; inform nurses if symptoms severe.
4. Inform nurses if more analgesics are required.

B. Wound care

1. Diet can be resumed once the patient is fully conscious.
2. You may experience some wound pain which could be relieved by analgesics.
3. Ice therapy may help to relieve pain and control swelling.
4. Initially, the operated site will be bulkily dressed and elevated to prevent swelling. Splint or brace may be made to protect the affected limb.
5. The principle of wound care is to keep it clean and dry.
6. Avoid excessive movement of the operated limb.
7. If necessary, you will be referred to physiotherapist for muscle strengthening exercise and training.

C. Diet

Resume diet, usually 4 hours after anesthesia, and when taking sips of water well.

Common Risks and Complications (not all possible complications are listed)**A. Anesthesia related complications**

1. Cardiovascular: myocardial infarction or ischemia, stroke, deep vein thrombosis, pulmonary embolism, etc.
2. Respiratory: atelectasis, pneumonia, asthmatic attack, exacerbation of chronic obstructive airway disease.
3. Allergic reaction and shock.
4. Toxicity of local anesthetic may result in serious complication although rare.

B. Procedure related complications

Rare, but may have infection, excessive swelling or bleeding.

Things to take note after discharge

1. Contact your doctor or a nearby Accident & Emergency Department if you find increasing discharge, pain and or redness around the wound.
2. Take analgesics prescribed by your doctor if required.
3. Follow up as scheduled.

Remarks

This is general information only and the list of complications is not exhaustive. Other unforeseen complications may occasionally occur. In special patient groups, the actual risk may be different. For further information please contact your doctor. Evangel Hospital reserves the right to amend this leaflet without prior notice. We welcome suggestions or enquiries on the information provided in this leaflet. Please contact our Healthcare professionals so that we could follow up and make improvement.

Reference

Hospital Authority: “General Information on Arthroscopy” (2019)

Smart Patient: https://www21.ha.org.hk/smartpatient/SPW/MediaLibraries/SPW/SPWMedia/Arthroscopy_English.pdf?ext=.pdf (20-07-2023)