

Total Knee Replacement

After Visit Summary

This is general information. Please see your After Visit Summary for how to take care of yourself after surgery.

Your health care team will work with you to understand any challenges you have after your hospital stay. This will help your team work toward a plan to make sure you have the right care and support to help manage your health after you leave the hospital.

Your Surgery

You are having surgery to replace your damaged knee.

What to Expect After Surgery

- You may feel some discomfort or swelling in your knee.
- Tell all health care providers that you had a knee replacement before you have any surgery, X-rays, dental work, or other tests or procedures. You may need to take antibiotics.

Before the Surgery

- Tell your health care provider if you:
 - are pregnant
 - have a latex allergy
 - have diabetes
 - take a blood-thinner medicine.
- Remove any jewelry or piercings.
- Arrange to have someone drive you home. You will not be able to drive after the surgery.

Pain Relief

- Take any prescription or over-the-counter medicine as directed.
- For the first 48 hours, you may place an ice pack or bag of frozen vegetables on your knee for pain relief and to help keep the swelling down.
 - Wrap the bag in a light towel before using.
 - Keep the ice pack on for 30 minutes and then keep it off for 30 minutes.

Activity

- When lying in bed, put a pillow **under the calf only** to raise your knee. **Do not put the pillow under your knee.**
- Avoid sudden changes in movements.
- Do not kneel or use a low toilet or low furniture.
- When lying on your back, keep the knee of your affected leg pointing straight up.
- Follow your health care provider's and physical therapist's directions for using a walker, crutches or cane.
- Follow the weight-bearing restrictions your therapist taught you.
- Follow your health care provider's directions for bending, twisting and other activities.
- Your health care provider will tell you when it's OK for you to shower, drive, return to work, exercise, lift, and have sex.

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- Do not take a tub bath.
- Follow your health care provider's directions for exercises and activity.
- Do not sit for longer than one hour without standing, stretching or taking a few steps.
- Wear your surgical stockings (white elastic socks) while you are awake until your health care provider tells you to stop. You may take them off to take a shower.
- Alternate rest and activity.
- Get regular activity. Try to walk for a total of 30 minutes a day.
 - Start by walking for 5 to 10 minutes at one time and slowly build to walking 30 minutes.
 - Walk often. Try to walk at least 4 to 5 times a day.
 - Increase the amount you walk as you are able.
- Sleep with a pillow between your legs. Put the pillows crosswise between your legs before turning on your side.
- Put on your shoes and socks as directed.
- Avoid tobacco and secondhand smoke. They can slow your recovery.

Incision Care

- Keep the incision dry until the stitches or staples are removed.
- Your stitches or staples will be taken out at your follow-up appointment.
- Do not use lotions, creams, ointments, gels or powders on your incision site.
- Follow any directions your health care provider gives you.

Food and Beverages

- Eat well-balanced meals. Follow any instructions your health care provider gave you.
- Drink more liquids.
- Avoid alcohol while you are taking prescription pain medicine.

When To Call Your Health Care Provider

Call your health care provider if you:

- have a temperature of 101 F or higher
- have new pain or pain you can't control
- have bleeding that won't stop
- have a tender or painful calf
- have numbness, tingling or weakness in your surgical leg
- have signs of infection at your incision site:
 - pain or swelling
 - redness, odor or warmth
 - green or yellow discharge
- have trouble with breathing, feeling dizzy, vision problems, confusion or headaches
- have trouble with urinating or bowel movements
- are unable to get out of bed
- have nausea (upset stomach) or vomiting (throwing up) that won't stop
- have any questions or concerns.

Follow-up Appointment

Please keep all follow-up appointments with your health care provider or specialist, even if you are feeling well.