

After Knee Replacement

Taking Care of Your New Knee:

Phase I

Day of Surgery:

- Use caution
- Rest
- Walk short distances

Phase I

Post-op Day 2:

- Stand up and walk with assistance
- Work on increasing knee range of motion

Phase I

Discharge from Hospital:

- Stand up and walk with minimal assistance

Phase II

(Week 1-3)

Getting Comfortable:

- Walk longer distances and take stairs with assistance
- Continue rehab

Phase III

(Week 4-6)

Increased Function:

- Walk and take stairs with little or no assistance
- Continue rehab
- Regular activities and work resumed

Phase IV

(Week 7-12)

Increased Function:

- Work for longer duration
- Continue exercise and rehab

Phase V

(Months 4-24)

Exercise and Normal Activity:

- Your knee will continue to heal, change and become more comfortable for the next 2 years

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Hospital Stay^{1,2}

- You and your team of doctors will determine exactly how long you need to stay in hospital.
- You will begin walking, often the day of the surgery, with the use of a walker, brace, or crutches.

Questions to Ask your Doctor^{4,6}

- How much walking can I do?
- What are the signs that something is wrong with my new knee?
- What are things I cannot do?
- How do I take care of my surgical wound?
- What medications do I take at home?
- Can I take a shower?
- How can I get my home ready?
- When can I go back to see my dentist?

Pain Management ^{1,2,5}	Bruising ^{1,2,5}	Swelling ^{1,2,5}
<p>Pain management is an important part of your recovery. The following approaches can help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Doctor-prescribed oral medication• Physical therapy• Assistive knee braces	<p>Bruising may last for up to 2 weeks. Bruising is often normal, but consult your surgeon if you have concerns.</p> <p>To help reduce bruising, the following approaches can help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elevate leg over pillow	<p>Swelling may be present for as long as 6 months post-surgery. The following approaches can help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Post-op exercises• Leg elevation• Physical therapy

Next Steps^{1,6}

The success of your surgery depends heavily on what you do once you go home.

- Over time you will return to a regular level of activity.
- It is important to reduce the impact on your knee joint. Some activities involve higher impact than others, for example: downhill skiing, soccer, basketball, and repetitive lifting or squatting.
- Low impact activities such as hiking, gardening, swimming, tennis and golf are encouraged.
- The use of an assistive knee brace may help to reduce joint impact and pain.

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Home Set-Up Tips

Becoming aware of possible hazards in your home can make your recovery easier and safer.

- Rearrange furniture to make moving around the house easier.
- Remove throw rugs that could cause you to slip or trip.
- You may want to temporarily rearrange rooms to avoid using the stairs (e.g., make the living room the bedroom).
- Bathroom: Install a shower chair, grip bar and a raised toilet seat.
- Sit in a proper chair that is firm, doesn't sit too low and has a footstool for leg elevation.

Keeping Your Knee Healthy

Follow your doctors advice to ensure a successful recovery.

- Walk regularly and continue to do your recommended exercises every day.
- Avoid activities that could cause a fall.
- Try to minimize stress on your knee throughout the day.
- Use an aid or brace to keep weight off your healing knee.
- Advise your dentist of your knee surgery – antibiotics may be necessary to prevent infection.
- Contact your surgeon or family doctor at any time if you have concerns.

Additional Online Resources

American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons
www.aaos.org

The Arthritis Foundation
www.arthritis.org

by Matthew Kivell, B.Kin.

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