

Guidelines

The following guideline explains what to expect and your role before surgery and while in the hospital.

These are guidelines only. Not all patients follow this pathway exactly. **Most people leave hospital 3 days, after the day of surgery.** Some people go home sooner and a few may stay longer for medical concerns.

Please review your Before, During and After Booklet to learn how to get in the best possible shape for your surgery and recovery.

Being well prepared will help you have a smooth and safe recovery. Getting up and moving early is the key.

Starting Now

- ♦ Have a check up with your Family Doctor and or specialists.
- ♦ Get your home in shape.
- ♦ Start a fitness program.
- ♦ Eat a nutritious diet.
- ♦ Work on your weight if that is a problem.
- ♦ Arrange for someone to be there for you when you come home from the hospital.
- ♦ You will need to have blood work done and xrays taken.

1 - 3 Months Before Surgery

- ♦ Attend a Joint Replacement Workshop.
- ♦ Arrange transportation to and from the hospital
- ♦ You will be scheduled for a Pre-admission Clinic (PAC) visit.
- ♦ At the PAC you will be assessed by health professionals to make sure you are in good shape and prepared for surgery.

Day of Surgery

- ♦ Go to the admission area at the scheduled time. They will tell you where to go to get ready for surgery.
- ♦ Health professionals will ask questions about your health.
- ♦ They will put an intravenous (IV) in your arm and help you prepare for surgery.
- ♦ You will go to the operating room.
- ♦ When the surgery is finished, you will go to the recovery room.
- ♦ The nurses there will frequently check your vital signs and your leg.
- ♦ When you are awake, you will be moved in your bed to the patient care unit.

On the Patient Care Unit

- ♦ The nurses will frequently check your vital signs and your leg.
- ♦ The nurses will help you move from side to side.
- ♦ Pump your ankles and feet up and down.
- ♦ Squeeze the muscles in your legs frequently.
- ♦ Take deep breaths to clear your lungs. Cough if needed.
- ♦ Health care professionals may help you to stand up at your bedside.
- ♦ You will have an IV in your arm and possibly a catheter in your bladder.
- ♦ You may be given pain medicine by mouth.
- ♦ Be sure to tell your nurse if you have pain.

Day 1, 2 or 3 After Surgery

- ♦ Your IV will be removed on Day 1.
- ♦ If you have a catheter in your bladder, that will also be removed on Day 1.
- ♦ You will do your foot and leg exercises as taught by your Physiotherapist.
- ♦ You will be getting up in the chair for two meals.
- ♦ You will be up walking with the physiotherapist and health care team.
- ♦ You will have pain medicine given by mouth. Be sure to let your nurse know if you have pain.
- ♦ Your nurse will teach you or your support person to give your low molecular weight heparin injections and to change your dressing.
- ♦ You will be getting up to the toilet.
- ♦ You may be getting dressed - be sure to have comfortable loose fitting clothing and supportive low heeled shoes.

You are ready to go home when:

- ✓ You have no serious medical concerns.
- ✓ Your pain is controlled with pain medicine.
- ✓ You are able to get up to the bathroom – and use it.
- ✓ You can eat.
- ✓ You have your home set up and someone available to help, as arranged prior to surgery.
- ✓ You are able to walk around safely.

At Home After Surgery

- ♦ Ensure that your prescriptions are filled and take all medications as instructed.
- ♦ Do your exercises as taught by your physiotherapist.
- ♦ Take your pain medications as instructed. Do not wait until your pain is severe. If your pain is not controlled, call the orthopaedic team at the hospital or talk to your family doctor.
- ♦ Get up and move around frequently.
- ♦ Rest when you feel sore or tired.
- ♦ Do not sit for long periods of time.
- ♦ Keep your leg up and apply cold packs to the area around your new joint for 20 minutes 3 times a day.
- ♦ Eat a high fibre diet and drink lots of water. Use laxatives: sennakot or lactulose if you are constipated.
- ♦ Call the orthopaedic unit if you have questions.

Call your surgeon's office if you have:

- ♦ **redness or drainage from your incision**
- ♦ **warmth and redness of your calf.**

Call 911 or go to Emergency if you have chest pain



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Pathway for Patients Having Hip or Knee Replacement Surgery