Managing After Your Hip Or Knee Joint Replacement
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What Is Hip Or Knee Joint Replacement

What is Hip or Knee Joint Replacement Surgery?
Joint replacement surgery is removing a damaged joint and putting in an artificial one. Sometimes the whole joint is not removed, only the damaged parts are replaced or fixed.

Why do people have joint replacement surgery?
• For most people who have hip/knee replacement surgery, the procedure results in:
  A decrease in joint pain.
  Increased mobility.
  Improvements in activities of daily living.
  Improved quality of life.

What are some of the materials used for the replacement parts?
The materials used in artificial joints vary, depending on the type of joint being replaced and how the joint needs to function.
• Hip joints need to be sturdy and able to bear your body’s weight.
• Knee joints need to be flexible, as well as strong.
• In general, the components must be durable, flexible and able to function in the body.
• Some materials used are:
  Metal
  Ceramic
  Cement - Plastic
After Surgery

What happens after surgery?
After surgery, most people stay in the hospital for an average of 2 to 3 days. While you are in the hospital you will get:

- Medication to treat your pain.
- Medication to prevent blood clots.
- You may receive antibiotic medications to prevent infections.
- Special boot or stocking to prevent blood clots in the legs.
- Physical therapy – Most people are able to stand and walk (with help) within one day after surgery.

Where do I go after I leave the hospital?

- Some people go to a rehabilitation facility for a short time; while some go home, with home care services.
- Wherever you go, you will need to do your exercises and have physical therapy.

How should my home be prepared?

- Remove all scatter rugs and obstacles.
- Rearrange furniture so you can maneuver with a walker or crutches.
- Securely fasten electrical cords around the edges of the room.
- Have adequate lighting, including a night light.
- Rearrange frequently used items to within arms reach.
Pain management at home

- Some patients have a fear of taking pain medicine because they feel they will quickly become addicted to pain medication. This is simply not true. After surgery, patients have a good reason to have pain and this is appropriately treated with pain medication.

- It often takes less medication to control a person's pain if the medication is taken as soon as you experience discomfort. Pain medication may cause constipation. Your surgeon may prescribe an over-the-counter stool softener.

- Patients can also help relieve their pain with means other than medication:
  
  Applying ice to the hip/knee area after therapy can go a long way toward controlling the swelling that often causes discomfort after exercise and activity.

  On the other hand, when patients have discomfort from stiffness, usually doing some exercises will help relieve this pain more than any medicine will.

  Breathing exercises may help you relax and reduce pain.
Temporary Rules

Temporary rules to follow at home after Hip Replacement

• Your activities will be determined by your surgeon.
• Keep knees apart at all times. A pillow between the knees will help when sitting or lying down.
• When getting into or out of bed, keep the knees apart.
• Use firm chairs with a straight back, high seat, and arm rests.
• Do not lean forward when getting up from a sitting position.
• When sitting or lying down do not cross your legs.
• Do not use chairs with wheels.
• Do not bend your hips more than 90°.
• Your surgeon will tell you when you no longer need to follow these rules.

Temporary rules to follow at home after Knee Replacement

• Your activities will be determined by your surgeon.
• Increase the range of motion of the new knee. This can be done using a continuous passive motion (CPM) machine (this is sometimes sent home with the patient) or by exercising.
• Keep knee straight when resting.
**Temporary rules to follow at home after Knee Replacement**

- Do not use chairs with wheels.
- Control your weight to help your new knee joint last longer.
- **Do not** put a pillow under your new knee when lying down.
- Do not kneel.
- Your surgeon will tell you when you no longer need to follow these rules

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**Care Of Your Incision**

**How do I care for my incision?**

- Keep the incision clean and dry.
- Follow the instructions given to you from the hospital about changing the dressing.
- Follow your surgeon’s directions regarding showering or bathing.
- Take note of changes to your incision. Refer to page 17 for when you need to notify your surgeon.
- Take your temperature as instructed.
What equipment will I need at home?
The hospital or rehabilitation facility will help you arrange for the equipment you will need at home.

- If you are having hip or knee replacement surgery you may need:
  - A walker (with or without wheels, depending on your needs).
  - A raised toilet seat.
  - A long-handled reacher / grabber.
  - Hip surgery patients may also find a portable hip cushion useful.

- A hip kit can be ordered and may include:
  - Long handled reacher / grabber.
  - Sock aid.
  - Elastic shoelaces.
  - Dressing stick.
  - Long handled bath sponge.
  - Long handled shoehorn.

- Other equipment which may be helpful to you includes:
  - Professionally installed grab bars beside the tub and toilet.
  - Bathtub seat or shower chair.
Tips For Taking Your Medications

Medications are very important

- Inform your surgeon about all medications, over the counter drugs, vitamins and herbal supplements you are taking.
- Carry a list of your medications in your wallet or purse. Write down the dose of each drug and the time of day that you take them.
- Learn what each medication does and what it looks like.
- Make sure you have enough medications. Plan ahead so you don't run out.
- Take ALL of your medications as prescribed. If you think you may be experiencing a side effect from a medication, call your surgeon and also mention it at your next appointment.
- Keep all medications in their original labeled container. **DO NOT** mix different medications into the same container for storage, unless you are using a pill organizer to help you manage your medications.
- Don't be afraid to call your surgeon if you have any questions.
- After your surgery, your surgeon may want you to take antibiotics before dental work or any invasive medical procedure to help prevent infection.
- Stay safe while on blood thinners.

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO KEEP ALL MEDICATIONS AWAY FROM CHILDREN!**
Staying Safe While On Blood Thinners

Orthopedic surgeons give a blood thinner (for a brief time after surgery) to decrease the risk of developing blood clots in the veins of your legs following surgery.

**Taking your blood thinner:**
- Always take as directed.
- Always take the same time every day.
- Notify your surgeon if you miss a dose.

**Possible side effects**
- Bleeding and bruising are the most common side effects.

**Call your doctor immediately if you have any of the following signs of serious bleeding:**
- Red or brown urine.
- Bleeding from the gums or nose that does not stop quickly.
- Anything red in color that you cough up.
- A cut that does not stop bleeding.

**Using other medication**
- Inform your surgeon about all medications, over-the-counter drugs, vitamins and herbal supplements you are taking.
Preventing injuries while on blood thinners.

- Be careful when you use knives or scissors.
- Use a soft toothbrush.
- Use an electric razor.
- Always wear shoes.

Foods you eat can affect how well your blood thinner works.

- Ask your surgeon if you need to pay attention to the foods that may affect your blood thinner.

For example:
- Broccoli
- Lettuce
- Soybeans
- Spinach
- Cranberries
- Alcohol
- Garlic
- Most green vegetables
- Green/herbal teas
Making healthy food choices and eating a well-balanced diet can help you fight infections, give you more energy and make you feel better.

- A balanced diet, often with an iron supplement and Vitamin C, is important to promote proper tissue healing and to restore muscle strength.
- Drink plenty of fluids and **avoid excessive intake of Vitamin K** while you are taking the blood thinner medication. Food rich in Vitamin K include:
  - broccoli
  - cauliflower
  - brussels sprouts
  - liver
  - green beans
  - soybeans
  - spinach
  - kale
  - lettuce
  - cabbage
  - onions
- Try to limit coffee intake and avoid alcohol.
- You should continue to watch your weight to avoid putting more stress on the joint.

If you have any questions about your diet please ask your surgeon.
Always Consult Your Doctor First

Exercise

Your surgeon and physical therapist will give you exercises to do after surgery. It is very important to follow these instructions.

• You will have an exercise program to follow when you go home.
• Exercises will improve blood flow, increase motion and build strength.
• Short walks are good ways to begin exercise, however, do not walk to the point of pain or discomfort.
• Stop any exercise that causes chest pain, shortness of breath, dizziness or lightheadedness.
• Before resuming sexual activity, speak with your surgeon.
• Avoid heavy lifting.
• Ice your affect area on a regular basis after exercising.

Stick with it! Finding an exercise "buddy" will also help you stay motivated. Staying on your walking and exercise program will help speed your recovery.
You are responsible for your own health and should establish a self care plan with your surgeon.

• Your family and friends are part of your healthcare team.
  Ask your family members or friends for help in monitoring your condition.
  If you are unable, your family and friends should know when to report new symptoms or a change in symptoms to your surgeon.
  Notify your surgeon if you notice sudden calf pain, chest pain or shortness of breath, as these are signs of a blood clot.

• Before calling your surgeon have the following information with you:
  List of medications.
  Phone number to your local pharmacy.

It is important to be specific when you are speaking to the surgeon.

The next page is a helpful guide you may want to use when you call or talk with your surgeon.
Talking With Your Surgeon

When you talk with your surgeon it’s important to tell him/her exactly what is happening. A guide you may want to follow:

Before making the call, or at your next visit, have the following information with you:

- Your personal health record
- List of your medications
- Pharmacy name and telephone number
- Your current problems/illnesses/diagnoses
- Write down any questions you may have

**SITUATION:**

I am having:

- Pain (explain where the pain is felt)
- Fever or chills
- Increased redness or swelling of incision
- Drainage or odor from incision
- Lost interest in doing anything

- Constipation
- Difficulty urinating
- Nausea or vomiting
- Feeling down or depressed
- Other (explain):

**BACKGROUND**

I began to feel this way: (When did it start?)
What makes it better?
What makes it worse?
How long it lasts?
It prevents me from doing my usual activities: Yes No

**ASSESSMENT**

I think I feel this way because of (include any other possible reasons): emotional, stress, finances, new medication:

**RECOMMENDATION (by your surgeon)**

(Write down your surgeon’s instructions)
Green Zone - This is your goal.
- You are able to walk for short periods
- Your incision has no drainage or increased redness
- Your pain is under control

Yellow Zone = "Caution"
- There is excessive or increasing pain
- Fever or chills
- Redness or swelling increases around operative area and elevating does not help
- Drainage or odor is noted from the incision site
- Calf pain

Red Zone = "Medical Alert"
You suddenly have
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain

A Self Management Plan for Recovery has three zones.
"Goal" Means you are progressing

- Continue taking your medications
- Continue to follow your exercises
- Keep your physical therapy appointments
- Keep your physician appointments

"Caution" Means:
Call your Home Health Nurse/Physical Therapist and/or your Surgeon as soon as you notice any of these changes

Home Health Agency 24 hour phone number is: ______________________

Surgeon Phone Number: ______________________

"Medical Alert" Means
This indicates that you need to be evaluated by a physician right away

Call 911

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>This is your goal. You are progressing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Caution: This zone is a warning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Emergency: Call 911 or go to the Emergency Room</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional Resources

1. American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS)
   6300 N. River Road
   Rosemont, IL 60018
   **Telephone:** 847-823-7186
   **Website:** www.aaos.org

2. National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS)
   1 AMS Circle
   Bethesda, MD 20892-3675
   **Telephone:** 301-495-4484
   **TTY:** 301-565-2966
   **Website:** www.niams.nih.gov
Brookhaven Memorial Hospital Medical Center
101 Hospital Road
Patchogue, NY 11772
(631) 654-7100
Home Care Department
(631) 758-3600

J.T. Mather Memorial Hospital
75 North Country Road
Port Jefferson, NY 11777
(631) 473-1320

St. Catherine of Siena Medical Center
50 Route 25A
Smithtown, NY 11787
(631) 862-3000

St. Francis Hospital - The Heart Center
100 Port Washington Boulevard
Roslyn, NY 11576
(516) 562-6000

South Nassau Communities Hospital
One Healthy Way
Oceanside, NY 11572
(516) 632-3000
Home Care Department
(516) 377-5000

Good Samaritan Hospital Medical Center
1000 Montauk Highway
West Islip, NY 11795
(631) 376-3000
Home Care Department
(631) 969-8200

Mercy Medical Center
1000 North Village Avenue
Rockville Centre, NY 11570
(516) 705-2525

St. Charles Hospital
200 Belle Terre Road
Port Jefferson, NY 11777
(631) 474-6000

St. Joseph Hospital
4295 Hempstead Turnpike
Bethpage, NY 11714
(516) 579-6000

Winthrop - University Hospital
259 First Street
Mineola, NY 11501
(516) 663-0333
Home Care Department
(516) 663-8000

Catholic Home Care
1150 Portion Road
Holtsville, NY 11742
(631) 696-1002
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Total Hip /Knee Replacement: American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS).
What is Hip Replacement: National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS).
Patient Education for Total Hip or Knee Replacement: Orthopaedic Nursing What is Hip/Knee Replacement: UptoDate, 2011.
Prepare your Home to Your Return after Total Joint Replacement: The Ohio State University Medical Center.
Learning about Your Health, Total Hip Replacement: Caring for Yourself at Home: California Pacific Medical Center, A Sutter Health Affiliate.
Total Hip Replacement: Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Center.