

Joint Replacement Center

Tips for Successful Outcome

Thank you for choosing Memorial Health Care System! We look forward to caring for you during your upcoming surgery. Please read these tips for information vital to your surgical experience and outcome.

Note: These are general instructions. Physician orders will be written based on your individual needs

Before coming to the hospital: (this should be what you work on in the two weeks prior to your surgery)

In order to help you prepare for surgery, your surgeon and Memorial's orthopedic team **require** that you read this hand out to familiarize yourself with some of the upcoming expectations. As most clients are only hospitalized for 1 day before being discharged home, it is essential that you have this knowledge before admission.

Most patients who have a joint replacement will need some medical equipment; Memorial's Case Managers will contact the medical equipment company of your choice and arrange for the equipment to be delivered to your hospital room by the equipment company prior to your discharge home. **Please call your insurance provider before your scheduled surgery to determine if the medical equipment company of choice is covered by your insurance plan.**

It is anticipated that you will begin physical therapy the day after you discharge from the hospital whenever possible. Because physical therapy is such an important part of your recovery process, your case manager will also schedule your first physical therapy and lab work appointments with the facility of your choice. These appointments will also be made according to your physician's recommendations. This will be done prior to your discharge from the hospital, in order to facilitate an easier transition for you. This information will be given to you by your nurse prior to your discharge home. **Please call your insurance provider before your scheduled surgery to determine if the physical therapy facility of choice is covered by your insurance plan.**

You may need some help at home for the first several days or weeks. The time you will need help will depend on your progress. Some of the needs you will have are someone to assist you with meal preparation, laundry, cleaning house, yard work, and care for pets. You will need someone to drive you to and from Outpatient Therapy, lab and physician visits. Family members or friends need to be available to help if possible. Preparing before your surgery, can minimize the amount of help required. Having the

laundry done, house cleaned, yard work completed, clean linens put on the bed, and single portion frozen meals will reduce the need for extra help.

On the day of surgery; Please bring the following items with you to the hospital:

- Loose, casual clothes- Most knee replacement patients prefer shorts and tee shirts. Most hip replacement patients prefer pants or shorts that are loose around the waist and hips, and t-shirts. Please bring what is comfortable. Clothing should be appropriate for wearing on walks in hallways
- Gym shoes- Must have non-skid soles, must have a back, and must either tie or have a Velcro closure. No shoes that flip-flop, as these are a trip/fall hazard following joint replacement surgery.
- Any personal items- You are welcome to bring things that would make your stay more pleasant, such as your own hygiene products, reading material, or puzzle books, and gowns/clothes for night time, if desired.
- A form of payment for medical equipment- Knee patients purchasing pedals for therapy (approx. \$30) and hip patients purchasing hip kit for daily needs (approx. \$40), will need to bring some form of payment with you for these items
- Completed Pink **Designation of Services** form that you received during your pretesting appointment

If you need additional information, have questions or desire to schedule a free pre-operative tour of the orthopedic unit, please contact our Orthopedic Patient Educator at 423-443-5397 or our Orthopedic Nurse Manager at 495-7245 for Hixson and 495-4618 for Glenwood campus. In addition you can contact our Case Management Department at 495-8482 for any questions related to after hospital care. The Nursing Director may be reached at 423-495-4609 for any needs pre hospitalization, while in the hospital or even post hospitalization.

After your surgery:

Pain Control

Your nurse and the staff will ask you how much pain you are having on a scale of 0-10. "0" – zero means no pain and 10 means the worst ever, there is no wrong answer. Just say the number you think best represents your pain level.

- Most patients receive a nerve block for pain control following joint replacement surgery. These blocks are a one time injection which slowly wears off. They can last for up to 72 hours. As the block wears off, we will start giving

you pain pills. Pain pills should be taken regular enough to keep pain tolerable. Your nurse will let you know how often the pain pills are available. Please ask your nurse whenever you feel like pain medication is needed or if you have other questions about your pain control.

- Pain medications often have side effects such as lightheadedness, nausea and vomiting, itching, low blood pressure and constipation. Talk to your nurse about symptoms you might be feeling due to medications and how they can be treated.
- Ice packs 3 (three) times daily for a minimum of 20 minutes will help reduce pain and swelling.

Activity

You will be up the same day as the surgery. It is normal to have fears and doubts about your new hip or knee, but it is ready for use. You will have soreness and stiffness, but activity helps to reduce both of these. Activity also decreases risks such as scar tissue formation, pneumonia, blood clots, constipation and infection. We encourage you to dress daily in casual clothes. This allows you to practice using new hip or knee and is more comfortable than wearing hospital gowns.

Physical Therapy will work with you twice daily. You will be placed on a walking schedule and perform exercises (sometimes in a group setting). PT will teach you safety regarding walker use, how to move your new joint and go up and down stairs (if you have these at home). Most patients use a **walker for 1 to 2 weeks.** Physical Therapy is vital for the success of your new joint!

Prevention and Safety

Preventing blood clots:

- TED hose should be worn 23 hours daily for 6 weeks
- Sequential or electric hose may be used while in hospital.
- Blood thinner **(such as Coumadin, Eliquis) medication** will be started while in hospital.
- Ankle pumps a minimum of **10 ankle pumps** every hour that you are awake
- The more active you are, the lower the risk of blood clots

Preventing pneumonia/infection:

- ICS or deep breather should **be used a minimum 10 exercises every hour that you are awake.** This often equates to once every TV commercial.

- Use alcohol hand gel at bedside
- Do not pick or play with dressing or incision on new Hip or knee
- Avoid sleeping with pets, wash hands frequently and change sheets daily when coming into contact with animals

Promoting Safety

- Always wear shoes or non-skid socks over hose when you are out of bed
- Follow your precautions for total hip patients to avoid dislocation

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions About Total Joint Replacement Surgery

Will I need any other equipment?

All joint replacement patients will need a walker for use following surgery. We recommended a two wheeled walker. Patients are typically on a walker for about 2 weeks.

After hip replacement surgery, you may need a high toilet seat for **about 12 weeks**. We can arrange to have one delivered to you, or you may borrow one. You will also be taught to use assistive devices to help you with lower body dressing and bathing. You may also benefit from a bath seat or grab bars in the bathroom. This can be discussed with your occupational therapist and or physical therapist. Equipment needs will be arranged by the Case Manager.

After knee replacement surgery, you will need pedals. Pedals are a vital part of your exercise program and will be used twice daily for a minimum of one month.

Where will I go after discharge from the hospital?

Most patients are able to go home directly after discharge. The Case Manager will help you with this decision and make the necessary arrangements.

Fast Track patients will have pre-determined post operative plans. This would be discussed with your MD well in advance of the actual surgery date

Because physical therapy is such an important part of your recovery process, your case manager will also schedule your first physical therapy and lab work appointments with the facility of your choice.

**** Please remember to contact your insurance provider before your scheduled surgery to determine if the physical therapy facility and medical equipment company of choice is covered by your insurance plan.**

Will I need help at home?

Yes. You will need some help at home for the first several days or weeks. The time period you will need help will depends on your progress. Some of the needs you will have are someone to assist you with meal preparation, laundry, cleaning house, yard work, and care for pets. You will need someone to drive you to and from Outpatient Therapy. Family members or friends need to be available to help if possible. Preparing ahead of time, before your surgery, can minimize the amount of help required. Having the laundry done, house cleaned, yard work completed, clean linens put on the bed, and single portion frozen meals will reduce the need for extra help.

Will I need physical therapy when I go home?

Yes. You will either have outpatient or in-home physical therapy. Patients are encouraged to utilize outpatient physical therapy. The Case Manger will help you arrange for an outpatient physical therapy appointment. If you need in-home physical therapy, we will arrange for a physical therapist to provide therapy at your home. Home health therapy is often only offered for a short period of time (1-2 weeks) and then patients begin outpatient therapy. The total length of time required for therapy varies with each patient, but is generally 4-6 weeks.

Avoiding Complications

RISK	HOW LONG IS RISK FOR	HOW TO PREVENT OR AVOID
Pneumonia	2 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ICS or deep breather 10 (ten) times every hour while awake - Activity helps to reduce risk such as sitting up during the day time
Edema/swelling	4-6 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ice pack 3 times daily for 20 minutes, this is minimum. Icing more often may be required to keep your pain and swelling tolerable.
Scar Tissue Formation	6 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activity early and often helps to reduce the risk - Physical Therapy participation with your maximum effort
Constipation	6 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reducing pain medication as pain level allows helps - Eat diet high in fiber - Drink lots of water - Take stool softener daily and laxatives as needed
Blood Clots	6 weeks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TED hose 23 hours daily for 6 weeks - Ankle pumps 10 times per hour while awake for 6 weeks - Activity helps to reduce risk - Coumadin or Blood Thinner
Dislocation (HIPS)	3-6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow hip precautions until stopped by your MD

