



Total Knee Replacement

Post Operative Instruction Guidelines
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The following is a guide to your postoperative knee replacement. Please feel free to ask questions regarding any of the following.

PHYSICAL THERAPY

If you are being discharged to home, there are three basic options for physical therapy: 1) Outpatient PT, 2) home PT 3) in-patient PT in a rehab unit

OUTPATIENT PT

Early outpatient PT is generally preferred if feasible. This can be done at Beacon West of Beacon Summit locations. If these locations are inconvenient, an alternate location is acceptable. PT should begin as soon as possible after discharge and continue 2-3 times per week for 6 weeks.

HOME BASED PT

If transportation is unavailable or not practical to outpatient PT, home physical therapy can be arranged for you. This is accomplished by the hospital social worker during your hospital stay. Home therapy is usually 2-3 times per week for 2-3 weeks or until mobility allows travel to outpatient PT

REHAB PLACEMENT

If going home is not an option, a rehab stay can be arranged. Therapy is typically twice a day at rehab units and is arranged by the facility. Typical stays in rehab last around 10-14 days but vary based on the individual.



You may shower as early as you like. Your wound has been closed with glue.

INCISION CARE

Your wound is closed with glue. In the majority of surgeries absorbable suture is used so there are no staples to remove. When the skin is thin or not appropriate for this type of closure, staples may be used. A dry dressing should be placed over the wound and replaced daily for the first week. No tape is necessary; the compression stockings that you are wearing will hold the dressing in place.

If there is significant drainage from the wound (more than a few small spots), please make an appointment to see Dr. Chaudhary

SHOWERS

You may shower after your surgery as early as post-operative day 1. The wound is sealed with glue and may get wet. Simply remove all dressings and stockings, allow water to run over wound, and then pat dry. Replace dressing and stockings. Do not scrub or use creams on the wound for first 4 weeks.

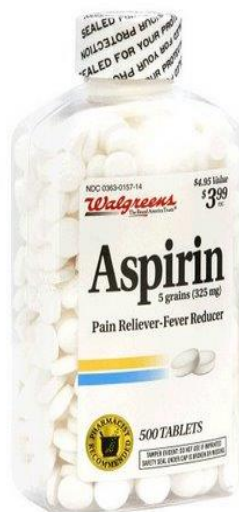


Thigh-high TED hose are highly recommended for four weeks.

STOCKINGS

Thigh-high compression stockings are recommended after a total knee replacement to prevent swelling and blood clots. The stockings should be worn full time for the first two weeks. After your first postoperative visit at two weeks, they may be removed while sleeping and only worn during the day or when active. The stocking should be worn in this way for an additional two weeks. Four weeks after surgery, the stockings are discontinued if leg swelling does not occur.

NOTE: For those with larger thighs or for whom the stockings do not fit properly, stockings can cause considerable pain. Compression of the skin in a tight band and even ulceration can occur. If this happens, or they cause considerable hardship, the compression stockings should be discarded. They are strongly recommended but not absolutely required, so please do not let them make you totally miserable.



BLOOD THINNERS

If you are a low-risk patient, you will be placed on aspirin to prevent blood clots. The recommended dosage is 81mg of enteric-coated aspirin two times a day for one month. If you fall into a group that is at higher risk for blood clots or are allergic to aspirin, injectable drugs such as Lovenox or oral Coumadin may be used instead.

Frequently Asked Questions



When can I get rid of these stockings?

The stockings are recommended for two weeks full time and two more weeks when out of bed. If causing extreme discomfort, you may discard them early but swelling may occur.



When can I drive?

Driving is okay when using a cane and not currently taking pain medications. Average time until driving is about two weeks for a right knee and one week for a left knee.



What is my knee made of?

Your knee is made of a cobalt-chromium femoral component and a titanium tibial baseplate. In between the two is an ultra high molecular weight polyethylene insert (plastic). The back of the kneecap has also been resurfaced with a plastic button.



My knee is red and warm, is that normal?

Feeling of warmth and redness are normal after total knee replacement. Drainage from the wound and fever above 101.5 are more worrisome and should not be ignored.



When do I see Dr. Chaudhary again?

The first follow up appointment is scheduled for two weeks after your surgery. Subsequent appointments are typically at 6 weeks and 12 weeks post op.



When can I go up stairs? Do I need to move my bed to the first floor?

You will be going up and down stairs before you leave the hospital. Moving your bed to the first floor is generally not necessary.