

# A Patient's Guide To Joint Replacement Surgery



PRE-OPERATIVE CARE, HOSPITAL CARE AND  
POST-OPERATIVE DISCHARGE HOME CARE



**SHORE**

Our Passion Makes Us The Best

ADVANCED SPINE &  
ORTHOPEDIC INSTITUTE

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### Joint Commission Certified

Shore Medical Center is proud to be Certified by the Joint Commission for Hip and Knee Replacement

#### *The Shore Advanced Spine & Orthopedic Institute's Joint Program is committed to:*

- Highest clinical quality and excellence
- Best practice
- Evidence-based research
- Providing an environment of care and respect to our patients, their families and each other.
- Ongoing community education and support

## Welcome to the Advanced Spine & Orthopedic Institute (ASOI) Joint Replacement Program

**Thank you for choosing the Advanced Spine & Orthopedic Institute at Shore Medical Center for your Joint Replacement Surgery.**

Shore Medical Center is committed to enhancing your healthcare experience and providing patient-centered care by combining clinical excellence with an exceptional patient and staff experience.

Our multidisciplinary staff is dedicated to providing you with excellent care and a foundation for a successful recovery. We follow patient-focused clinical pathways using evidence-based practice to provide safe high quality care and treatment, which accounts for our high levels of patient satisfaction.

### Using the Patient Guide

Preparation, education, continuity of care and a pre-planned discharge are essential for optimum results in joint surgery. Communication is an important part of this process. This Patient Guide is a communication and educational tool for patients, family members, surgeons, physicians, physical therapists and nurses.

**It is designed to help you understand:**

- What to expect during each step of the joint-replacement process.
- What your responsibilities are.
- How to care for yourself before and after joint surgery.

We believe that patients play a key role in ensuring their successful recovery. Our goal is to involve patients in every step of their treatment and recovery.

We will do everything possible to meet your expectations during your stay. Please inform us of any concerns you may have.

This Patient Guide provides the information needed for a safe and successful surgical outcome.

Remember this is just a guide. Your surgeon, nurse or therapist may add to or change some of the recommendations. Always follow their recommendations first and ask questions if you are unsure of any information. Keep this guide as a handy reference for at least the first year following surgery.

Bring this guide with you to the hospital, sub-acute rehabilitation, outpatient therapy and all your surgical visits. Read all the sections. You may make notes in the guide for future reference.

### Patient Partner

Shore Medical Center's Patient Partner Program was developed to formally involve family and friends in your care during your stay and when you return home.

A Patient Partner is whomever you choose. It can be a family member or a friend who would be interested and available to participate in your care and would like to become a member of your healthcare team. Your Patient Partner can assist you by providing physical, psychological and spiritual support.

Your Patient Partner will receive a pin that will identify them as a Patient Partner to medical center staff.

For more information please speak with your nurse.

## Joint Education Class and Pre-Admission Testing

### Joint Replacement Education Class

If you or someone you know is considering Joint Replacement surgery, you are encouraged to attend Shore Medical Center's free Joint Replacement Education Class. The class provides information on what you can expect before, during and after surgery. Classes last approximately 90 minutes.



The education classroom is held in Shore Medical Center's Surgical Pavilion Conference Room, located on the second floor. Use the main entrance on Medical Center Way, and our greeter at the desk will assist you.

Patients, spouses and Patient Partners are encouraged to attend the class. Please bring this Patient Guide to Joint Replacement Surgery book with you.

Please call 609-653-4600, option 2, to schedule your Joint Replacement Education class or if you have any questions.

### Pre-Admission Testing

Your surgeon's office will schedule your Pre-Admission Testing (PAT) date and time for you to complete your necessary studies before surgery.

**Bring the following items to your Pre-Admission appointment:**

- Insurance/Medicare Cards
- Photo Identification
- Referrals/Co-pay if required
- Advance Directives (Living Will)
- Current list of all medications

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q.** How long will I be in the hospital?

**A.** The average length of stay is one to three days depending on your progress.

**Q.** When can I return to work?

**A.** This is patient specific and depends on the type of work you do. This should be discussed individually with your surgeon.

**Q.** When can I start to drive?

**A.** This is patient specific and should be discussed individually with your surgeon.

**Q.** When will my staples come out?

**A.** Usually 14 days post operatively at the follow-up exam with your surgeon. If you are still in an inpatient rehabilitation facility, they will be removed there.

**Q.** Who is the Surgical Patient Flow Manager?

**A.** The Surgical Patient Flow Manager is a nurse clinician who organizes, coordinates, educates and oversees the entire surgical patient experience directly related to the Advanced Spine & Orthopedic Institute (ASOI) Program.





## Advanced Spine & Orthopedic Institute (ASOI) Multidisciplinary Team

Through consultation and collaboration, the multidisciplinary joint replacement team will work to help you achieve the best medical outcome.

### Your team includes:

**Yourself and a Patient Partner** – Prior to surgery we suggest you select a family member or caregiver who will be available to provide assistance and encouragement throughout your rehabilitation.

**Surgeons and staff** – Your orthopedic surgeon will manage your care, with assistance from his staff nurse and consulting physicians if indicated, such as a medical management physician and a physiatrist, who is a physician specializing in physical medicine and rehabilitation.

### The Nursing Department at Shore Medical Center consists of:

- **Pre-Admission Testing (PAT)** – In Pre-Admission Testing you will have the required studies done approximately seven to 14 days before your surgery. You will also receive education regarding your surgery and will have the opportunity to ask questions. The Joint Replacement Education class is offered on your pre-admission day visit. During the education class, you will meet an orthopedic nurse, physical therapist, case manager and a social worker. You will have the opportunity to ask questions and address any issues you may have.

- **Surgical Registration / Pre-Op Unit** – You will be admitted in this area on the day of surgery. Registration will be completed and you will be taken to Surgical Pre-Op. Your vital signs will be taken, an IV access will be started and you will speak with an anesthesiologist. You will remain in this area until the time of your surgery. We understand that wait times may vary; therefore, we encourage your family to wait with you. We also have televisions and guided imagery meditation tapes available to help keep you comfortable.
- **Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) / Recovery** – You will be taken to the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) / Recovery where you will recover. You will remain in this area until you are fully awake and ready to go to the Advanced Spine & Orthopedic Unit. The average length of stay in PACU is approximately 90 – 120 minutes. There is a chance you may need to receive your own recycled blood, lost during the procedure. This may cause you to remain in PACU for an extended period of time.
- **Advanced Spine & Orthopedic (ASOI) Nursing Team** – Once you are admitted to the Advanced Spine & Orthopedic Unit you will have a primary care nurse assigned to you. A charge nurse or team leader will help direct your care. The nurse manager oversees the Orthopedic Unit.
- **Surgical Patient Flow Manager** – A nurse clinician who organizes, coordinates, educates and oversees the entire surgical patient experience directly related to the Advanced Spine & Orthopedic Institute (ASOI) Program.
- **Nursing Assistants** – Under the direction and supervision of a Registered Nurse, a nursing assistant will assist with your care.
- **Transport Team** – Members of the transport team provide transportation to tests.
- **Health Unit Coordinator** – This coordinator works at the nurses' station and assists with communication between in-house departments and the nursing staff.

### The Rehabilitation Department at Shore Medical Center consists of:

- **Physical Therapists and Physical Therapist Assistants** – The Physical Therapists and Physical Therapist Assistants provide training and exercises to regain your functional mobility.
- **Occupational Therapists** – These therapists provide training to regain your ability to perform activities of daily living.

### Care Management/Social Services Team

- A member of the Care Management/Social Services Team will continuously review your progress and communicate with your surgeon and insurance company as needed. He/she will assist you with discharge options and home needs.

## What to Do 3 Weeks before Surgery?

### Your Doctor's Office

Your doctor's office will call you with your date and time of surgery and the date and time you are scheduled for pre-admission testing, including the Joint Replacement Education Class.

### Contact Your Insurance Company

Before surgery, you will need to contact your insurance company. The telephone number can be found on the back of your insurance card. You will need to find out if pre-certification, a second opinion or a referral form is required. Please inquire if your insurance company has a benefit for covering the cost of transportation from the hospital to the rehabilitation facility and Durable Medical Equipment (such as a walker, cane, or commode). It is very important to verify this information, as failure to clarify these questions may result in a reduction of benefits or delay of surgery.

If you are a member of a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO), you will go through the same registration procedure. However, you will need to call your HMO once your procedure has been scheduled to arrange for pre-admission lab studies that must be completed.

### Pre-Admission Process

After your surgery has been scheduled, a representative from Shore Medical Center will call you to gather your pre-registration information by telephone. You will need to have the following information ready when you are contacted:

- Patient's full legal name and address, including county.
- Home telephone number
- Religion
- Marital status
- Social Security number
- Name of insurance holder, his or her address, telephone number, his or her work address and work telephone number.
- Name of insurance company, mailing address, policy and group number.
- Patient's occupation, employer, address and telephone number.
- Name, address and telephone number of nearest relative.
- Name, address, and telephone number of someone to notify in case of emergency. This can be the same as the nearest relative.

### Obtain Medical Clearance

When you were scheduled for surgery you should have received a medical clearance letter from your surgeon. This will tell you whether you need to see your primary care physician and/or a specialist. Please follow the instructions in the letter.

### Obtain Laboratory Tests

Your surgeon will order your required pre-admission testing prior to your surgery. Your medical physician may order additional testing if necessary.

### Pre-Admission Testing

Be sure to complete all the pre-admission tests ordered. These tests must be completed for you to have your surgery.

### Advance Directive

The law requires that everyone over 18 years of age who is being admitted to a medical facility have the opportunity to complete an Advance Directive form concerning future decisions regarding your medical care. If you have an advance directive, please bring a copy to the hospital on the day of surgery.

If you do not have an Advance Directive and would like to complete one, you may contact the Patient Care Representative at Shore Medical Center by calling (609) 653-3882 for assistance Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### Start Pre-Operative Exercises

It is important to strengthen your muscles before undergoing surgery. This will help with your recovery. Start these exercises now and continue until the day of your surgery. Perform the exercises twice a day, although it is not harmful to do more.

### Medication Checklist

Discuss your present list of medications with your surgeon and follow any changes he prescribes. Notify your surgeon if you are taking any medications that may increase bleeding, including Aspirin, Motrin, Naproxen, and Coumadin. Your surgeon will instruct you if or when you need to stop these medications. If you are on insulin, discuss your dosage for the day of surgery with your surgeon. If you take any heart medications, consult with your surgeon if or when you should stop taking these medications.

### Select a Patient Partner

A Patient Partner is whomever you choose. It can be a family member or friend who is interested and available to participate in your care by providing physical, psychological, and emotional support. Your Patient Partner will be viewed by the staff as an integral member of your healthcare team. This person should accompany you to as many of your physician and hospital visits as possible. Your Patient Partner will receive a pin to be recognized by staff.



## What to Do 10 Days before Surgery?

### Prepare Your Home

- Clean your home.
- Do laundry and put it away.
- Make your bed with clean linens.
- Prepare meals and freeze in single-serving containers.
- Pick up throw rugs and tack down loose carpeting.
- Remove electrical cords and other obstructions from walkways to prevent falls.
- Install nightlights in bathrooms, bedrooms and hallways.
- Arrange to have someone collect your mail and care for pets or loved-ones, if necessary.
- Home Assessment Form – Found in the back of the book to be completed prior to surgery.

### Check with Your Surgeon Regarding all Your Medication

- This includes all medications containing Aspirin and anti-inflammatory medications such as Aspirin, Motrin, Naproxen, and Celebrex. These medications may increase bleeding.
- Coumadin – You will need special instructions on stopping the medication from your surgeon.
- Insulin – You will need special instructions regarding your dosage the day of surgery.
- Heart Medications – You will need special instructions if you can take any of your heart medications.

## What to Do 3 Days before Surgery?

### Hydration

Three days before your surgery:

- It is extremely important to keep yourself hydrated before your joint replacement.
- Water and electrolyte containing solutions (like Gatorade) can be used.
- You should start to hydrate yourself by drinking 8 ounces for every 20 pounds of your weight every day for three days prior to surgery. You should always consult with your primary care physician about proper hydration.

## What to Do the Day before Surgery?

### Determine Your Hospital Arrival Time

You will be asked to arrive at the hospital two hours before the scheduled surgery time to give the nursing staff sufficient time to start an intravenous (IV) line, prepare the surgical site, and answer questions.

## What to Do the Night before Surgery....

**DO NOT** eat or drink anything, **including water**, after midnight, unless otherwise instructed.

### Suggestions on What to Bring to the Hospital

- Personal hygiene items (toothbrush, powder, deodorant, battery powered electric razor, etc.)
- Insurance card
- Battery-operated items
- This Patient Guide to Joint Replacement Surgery Book
- Copy of Advance Directive
- Well-fitted, closed-heel slippers or tennis shoes
- Loose fitting warm-up suit
- Your medication list

## Special Instructions

- Check with your surgeon regarding what medications you need to take the morning of surgery.
- Please **DO NOT** bring valuables such as money, credit cards, wallets, purses and jewelry.
- For safety reasons, **DO NOT** bring electrical items.
- Eyeglasses and contact lenses should be kept in protective containers, labeled with your name and kept on your bedside table when not in use. Please **DO NOT** leave them unprotected or on your bed sheets.
- Dentures or partials, when not in place, should be kept in a denture cup labeled with your name and kept on your bedside table. Please **DO NOT** wrap dentures in tissues, napkins or washcloths; please **DO NOT** place them under your pillow or on your sheets.

**Note:** The hospital cannot assume responsibility for the loss of money, jewelry or other personal property kept in your room.

## Smoking Policy

- Smoking by anyone is prohibited throughout all buildings, grounds, parking lots, and walkways owned or operated by Shore Health Systems.
- If you are a smoker, inform your surgeon. Evidence has shown that smoking can decrease the rate of healing.

If you smoke and need help quitting, contact Shore's Tobacco Prevention and Treatment Program at (609) 653-3440.

## What to Do the Day of Surgery?

### Parking

**Parking is available at Shore Medical Center in two locations:**

- Valet service is available at the medical center's main entrance on Medical Center Way.
- Shore Medical Center also has a parking garage available for self parking. The garage can be accessed via Medical Center Way. On the second floor of the garage is a covered walkway that takes you directly into the medical center.

Upon your arrival, Shore Medical Center personnel will be able to assist you with any questions regarding parking.

### Registration

Upon entering the medical center from the main entrance, please proceed to the information desk. A greeter will direct you to the proper location for registration. The Operating Rooms are located on the third floor. You will take the main elevators to the third floor and proceed to the registration desk located on this level.

If entering from the parking garage, take the walkway located on the second level and proceed towards the medical center. At the end of the walkway is an information desk, where a greeter will be able to assist you in getting to the elevators. Proceed to the third-floor registration desk.

Family may stay with you until you go into surgery and then wait in the surgical waiting area on the third floor.



## What to Expect the Day of Surgery?

### Prior to Surgery

- A nurse will perform an assessment, including taking your vital signs, starting an intravenous line in a vein in your arm and confirming your operative site.
- Your anesthesiologist will meet with you for assessment, a discussion about your planned anesthesia and to obtain your consent for anesthesia.

### Types of Anesthesia

The two types of anesthesia available for joint surgery are:

- **General Anesthesia** – You will be unconscious and have no awareness or other sensations. This requires mechanical ventilation to assist in your breathing.
- **Regional Anesthesia** – You will receive an injection near a cluster of nerves to numb the area of your body that requires surgery. A sedative is used so that you will not be awake.

During surgery, technology is used to monitor the body's functions. Your anesthesiologist will interpret these monitors and appropriately diagnose, regulate and treat the body's organ systems while a personalized balance of anesthetic medication is administered. A nurse anesthetist may assist the anesthesiologist with your monitoring. At the conclusion of the surgery, the anesthesiologist reverses the effects of the anesthetic medication and returns you to consciousness.

### Side Effects

Your anesthesiologist will discuss the risks and benefits associated with the different anesthetic options, as well as any complications or side effects that may occur. The most common side effect is nausea or vomiting, which may be related to anesthesia or the type of surgical procedure. Medications to treat nausea and vomiting will be given, if needed. More serious adverse results can occur following anesthesia and surgery; however, they are extremely rare. Please consult your surgeon for any further information.

### Our Staff

The anesthesiologists at Shore Medical Center are board eligible and/or board-certified physicians. These professionals staff the operating room and PACU / Recovery Room.

## Post-Operative Care

### Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU)/Recovery Room

After surgery you will be transferred to the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU). Here, specially trained registered nurses will perform ongoing clinical assessments, keep you warm and as pain free as possible. You will be periodically encouraged to breathe deeply. The approximate length of stay in PACU is two to four hours, but this may vary.

Your anesthesiologist will be available to direct your care.

A nurse will check with you for reports of nausea, pain, positional discomfort, and if you need to go to the bathroom.

The following equipment may be used in PACU/Recovery:

- Oxygen may be administered.
- A pulse oximeter clip on your finger will monitor your oxygen level.
- An automatic blood pressure cuff on your arm will periodically take your blood pressure.
- Leads on your chest will monitor your heart activity.
- Your temperature will be taken.
- Elastic stockings and compression boots may be applied to your legs to help prevent blood clots and improve circulation.
- A PCA (patient controlled analgesia) pump may be used to administer intravenous pain medication.
- Ice therapy may be administered to the operative site.
- A drain may be placed near the surgical incision.

### Pain Medications

We understand that many patients are taking medications for pain relief. It is extremely important for you to relay this information to your healthcare team so we may effectively treat your post-operative pain.

Pain management is very important to your recovery. The nurse will assess your pain continuously throughout your stay. It is important to have your pain controlled so you may move around and participate in your post-operative care. Do not hesitate to inform the nurse when you are having uncontrolled pain or the pain is not relieved with the medication you are receiving. Our goal is to keep your pain well managed.

To manage the pain after surgery, you will be given medications. Pain will be controlled with pain injections or pills.

Some patients are treated with a PCA (patient-controlled analgesia) pump, a device that you use to administer your own pain medication through an intravenous line.

- The Pain Pump (PCA) is ordered by your surgeon.
- The amount of medication you can receive is pre-set by the surgeon. You cannot receive more than the amount programmed into the pump.
- Nurses will instruct you on the use of the pump.
- Nurses will evaluate your pain level.

- The amount of pain medication may be adjusted by the surgeon based on your pain relief.

### Numeric Pain Scale

Before and after your surgery, you will be asked to describe your pain using a numeric pain scale. You will assign the pain a number between 0 and 10, with 0 representing no pain and 10 the worst pain. The numeric pain scale helps your surgeon and nurse determine the proper pain medication and dosage you will receive. The pain scale also helps to determine if the pain medication provides relief from your pain. Inform your nurse if you are in pain.

### Possible Side effects of Narcotics

Narcotics are medications used to help relieve pain. Narcotics should only be used as directed by your physician.

- Dizziness/Drowsiness
- Impaired Judgment
- Mild Nausea / Vomiting
- Upset Stomach
- Constipation
- Blurred Vision
- Dry mouth
- Itchy

### While Taking Narcotics:

- Do not drive a car
- Do not drink alcohol
- Do not operate heavy machinery

### Safety Concerns

Our goal is to keep you safe and prevent a fall from occurring during your stay.

Some medications – including pain medication, sleeping medications and medications used during surgery – can increase your risk for a fall. Your safety will be monitored throughout your stay.

Our healthcare team is dedicated to keeping you safe. It is extremely important to call for assistance every time you would like to get out of bed. Well-fitted, closed-heel slippers or tennis shoes are necessary for all physical therapy sessions and walking.



## Transfer to the Advanced Spine & Orthopedic (ASOI) Unit

You will be taken to the Advanced Spine & Orthopedic (ASOI) Unit on Shore Medical Center's fourth floor once you are completely awake and your post-anesthesia benchmarks have been met. The Advanced Spine & Orthopedic nurse will orient you to your room and continually reassess your status. Your family members may visit you in your room.

The average length to stay for Joint Replacement is one to three days.

## Post-Operative Plan of Care – Day of Surgery

Your nurse will review the following plan of care as ordered by your surgeon:

- Monitor your vital signs.
- Inquire about your pain level and administer pain medication as needed.
- Administer and educate on medications.
- Assess for any wound drainage.
- Monitor drainage tubes from your surgical site.
- Monitor fluid intake and elimination.
- Instruct you on use of your incentive spirometer to ensure deep breathing with a return demonstration.
- Apply a compression device to your lower legs to help prevent blood clots.
- Instruct and encourage ankle pump exercises.
- Apply ice therapy to the operative site to prevent swelling and assist with pain control if ordered.
- Physical therapy evaluation within 24 hours post surgery – You will receive exercises to do while in bed, assistance getting out of the bed, walking with a walker, and an assessment of your equipment needs.
- You will get out of bed with assistance on the day of surgery.
- Bloodwork to assess blood levels as ordered.
- A medical doctor may be assigned for medical co-management.
- Discharge planning begins.
- Safety concerns will be assessed throughout your hospital stay.
- You will receive a visit from the Surgical Patient Flow Manager.



## Post-Operative Plan of Care – Day 1 and 2

Your nurse will review the following plan of care as ordered by your surgeon:

- Monitor your vital signs.
- Inquire about your pain level and administer pain medication as needed, transitioning to pain medications by mouth.
- Administer and educate on medications.
- Assess for any wound drainage.
- Monitor drainage tubes from your surgical site.
- Monitor fluid intake and elimination.
- Inquire about your last bowel movement.
- Instruct you on use of your incentive spirometer to ensure deep breathing with a return demonstration.
- Apply a compression device to your lower legs to help prevent blood clots.
- Instruct and encourage ankle pump, heel slides and leg lift exercises.
- Apply ice therapy to operative site to prevent swelling and assist with pain control if ordered.
- Physical therapy – You will receive exercises to do while in bed, assistance getting out of the bed and walking with a walker, and an assessment of your equipment needs.
- You will get out of bed with assistance.
- Bloodwork to assess blood levels as ordered.
- Your healthcare team of physicians and surgeons will monitor your post-op recovery.
- Social Services / Care Management and Discharge Planning will continue to be evaluated.
- Discharge teaching, planning, and possible discharge.
- Safety concerns will be assessed throughout your hospital stay.
- Monitor your pain level

## Discharge Options

There are several discharge options for your rehabilitation. Your level of function is one of the most important factors that will determine your discharge plan. Other factors that will influence your decision are the recommendations of your healthcare team, the amount of assistance available at home, the accessibility throughout your home and your insurance carrier's approval for payment.

**Ideally the Plan of Care is to be discharged to your home. Other options include:**

### Day Joint Program

The Day Joint Program is an aggressive outpatient program designed by Bacharach Institute for Rehabilitation. This program is a good option for patients who are able to be discharged safely to their home. Bacharach provides a service that transports patients from home to the designated outpatient facility. In order to qualify for this service, you must be capable of getting safely in and out of your home independently to the transport van. The program consists of several hours of physical and occupational therapies. During this Day Joint Program, you will have the services of an on-site nurse who will monitor your vital signs, assess your operative site and discuss any medication issues as needed. The van then takes you home at the end of the day so you are in the comfort of your own home at night. This Day Joint Program is five days for total knee replacement patients. At the end of this program, the physical therapist and physiatrist will make any further recommendations necessary for outpatient therapy.

## Home Services

Discharge to your home is an option, if assistance from family and friends is available and you are capable of moving safely within your home with a walker or crutches. Skilled nursing, physical and occupational therapy services will be provided at your home. When you are able to safely exit your home, you may be referred for outpatient therapy services.

## Discharge Care

When you go home, there are several things you need to know for your comfort, safety and a speedy recovery.

### Follow-Up Visit

Call your surgeon's office to schedule your follow up visit.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

### Pain Management

Take pain medication as prescribed. Plan to perform exercises at least 30 minutes after taking pain medicine. Check with your surgeon for any changes needed in pain control.

Pain medication may cause constipation. For this reason, you should drink plenty of fluids, eat a balanced diet, and stay as active as possible. Check with your surgeon for instructions on the use of stool softeners or laxatives.

Apply ice to the joint replaced after exercise and as needed to assist with pain control. A good ice pack is a family size bag of peas or corn wrapped in a hand towel.

Avoid remaining in one position for an extended period of time. Try to get up and walk or change position every 60 to 90 minutes. When sitting, alternate the position of your leg from foot-on-floor to elevated leg. **NEVER** cross your legs.

### Notify your surgeon for:

- Pain not relieved by medication.
- Pain or limited motion in joint.

### Caring For Your Incision

- You may shower (not bathe) after 72 hours, unless instructed by your surgeon.
- Notify your surgeon if there is increased drainage, redness, pain, odor or heat around the incision.
- You may place a light dressing over the incision if it is draining to prevent soiling your clothing. Otherwise, leave the incision open to air.
- Notify your surgeon if you notice an increase in drainage, redness or heat from your incision area. Staples will be removed within 10-14 days.

### Activity

- Immediately begin home exercise as instructed by your physical therapist from the hospital. Your home care physical therapist will advance your exercise program and activity as appropriate. Once you are able to exit your home independently, you may be referred for outpatient physical therapy. Call (609) 653-3512 for an appointment.
- Discuss with your surgeon when it is appropriate for you to start driving and returning to work.

## Caring for Yourself At Home



### Information Regarding Your Anti-coagulant (Blood Thinning) Medications

Common practice for joint replacement requires taking blood thinning medication to help prevent blood clots from forming after surgery.

Commonly used medications include Arixtra, Aspirin, Coumadin, or Xareltro. Arixtra is an injection given into the abdomen. Aspirin, Coumadin and Xareltro are oral medications. Your surgeon will order the medication that is best for you.

### Medications to Avoid While Taking Anti-Coagulants

Ask your doctor or pharmacist before using any other medicine, including over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products.

- Make sure your doctor knows if you are using pain or arthritis medicine, sometimes called NSAIDs (such as Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Naproxen, Advil, Aleve, Bextra, Celebrex, Ecotrin, or Motrin). Tell your surgeon if you are also using any other blood thinners (such as Clopidogrel, Warfarin, Coumadin, Aspirin or Xareltro).

### Report to Your Surgeon if any of the Following Potential Side Effects Should Occur

- Black, tarry stools
- Blood in your urine or stools
- Bleeding gums
- Unexplained nosebleeds
- Unusual bleeding, bruising, or weakness.
- Vomiting of blood or material that looks like coffee grounds.



## Safety Checklist

- Remove throw rugs to prevent slipping or falling.
- Install night lights.
- Be aware of pets or small objects on the floor.
- Eliminate uneven surfaces both inside and outside of the home.
- Use a cordless phone.
- Sit in a chair with arms; it will make it easier to stand up.
- DO NOT wear open-toed shoes or slippers without backs. Make sure soles are non-slip and shoes have good support.
- Stand up slowly from a sitting or lying position to avoid becoming light headed.
- Avoid lifting heavy objects for three months following your surgery. Ask your surgeon about any precautions you must take.
- Make sure crutch or walker tips are in good condition and screws are tight on equipment.
- Place important and frequently used items where they can be easily reached.
- Bed mattress should be at a height so that feet can easily touch the floor. This may require placing a board under the mattress or placing blocks under the legs of the bed.
- Raise the seat height of your chair by putting cushions on the seat. Always maintain proper sitting posture.
- Go slowly, take your time; many accidents happen when rushing.

## Bathroom and Kitchen Safety

- Plan ahead. Gather all of your cooking supplies at one time. Then sit to prepare your meal. This cuts down on excessive trips to the refrigerator, cupboards, etc.
- Place cooking supplies and utensils in a convenient location so they can be obtained without too much bending or stretching.
- Use a raised toilet seat or commode.
- Use safety rails around the tub/shower and toilet to assist with standing.
- Always use non-slip adhesive or rubber mats in the tub.
- Attach a soap-on-a-rope so it is within easy reach.

## Recognizing and Preventing Potential Complications

### Signs of Infection

Notify your surgeon if you experience any of the following:

- Increased swelling and redness at the incision site
- Change in drainage color, amount, odor
- Increased pain around the incision
- Fever greater than 101.5° F

## Blood Clots in Your Legs

Surgery may cause the blood to slow and coagulate in the veins of your legs, creating a blood clot. If a clot occurs, you may need to be admitted to the hospital to receive intravenous blood thinners. Prompt attention usually prevents the more serious complications of pulmonary embolus (blood clot in the lung). Moving around, especially walking, will reduce the chance of a blood clot developing.

### Signs of Blood Clots in Your Legs

- Swelling in thigh, calf or ankle that does not go down with elevation
- Pain and/or tenderness in calf
- Chest pain
- Difficulty in breathing

These signs are not 100% certain, but are warnings. Do not be alarmed if they are present, but **notify your surgeon, immediately**

### Prevention of Blood Clots

- Foot and ankle pumps
- Walking
- Compression stockings
- Blood thinners, such as Coumadin, Aspirin, Arixtra and Xareltro
- Changing positions frequently

## Pulmonary Embolus (Call 911 if suspected)

An unrecognized blood clot could break off in the vein and go to the lungs. This is an emergency and you should call 911 if you suspect it has occurred.

### Signs of Pulmonary Embolus

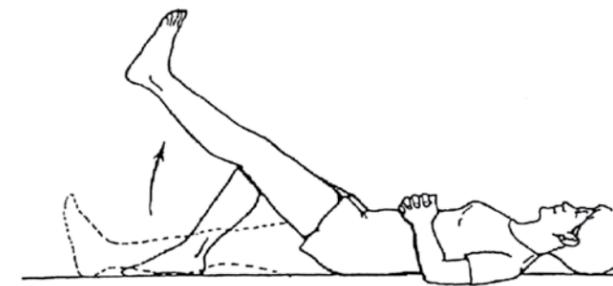
- Sudden chest pain
- Difficult and/or rapid breathing
- Shortness of breath
- Sweating
- Confusion

### Prevention of Pulmonary Embolus

- Prevent blood clots in your legs by walking, doing ankle pumps and wearing compression stockings.
- If you recognize a blood clot in your legs, call your surgeon immediately.

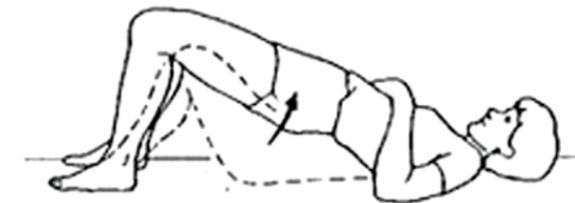
# Pre-Operative Hip or Knee Replacement Exercises

It is important to strengthen your muscles before undergoing surgery. This will help with your recovery. Start these exercises now and continue until the day of your surgery. Perform the exercises twice a day, although it is not harmful to do more.



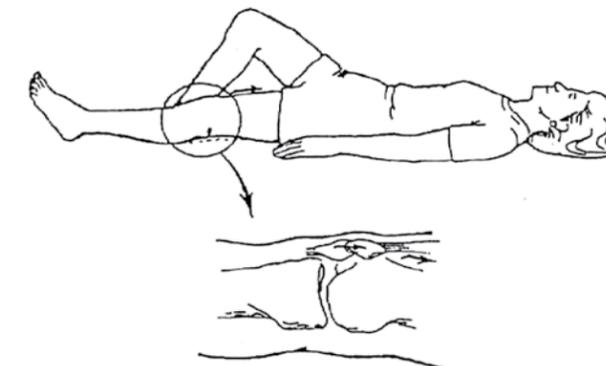
## Exercise 1

1. Lie on back with involved knee straight and the other knee bent as shown.
2. Keep the leg completely straight, then raise it about 12 inches.
3. Hold 3 seconds and slowly lower.
4. 10 repetitions, 2 sets



## Exercise 2

1. Lie flat on back with both legs bent as shown.
2. Tighten buttocks and raise them off floor as high as you can.
3. Keep pelvis level.
4. 10 repetitions, 2 sets



## Exercise 3

1. Sit or lie on your back with your leg straight.
2. Place a small towel rolled under each knee.
3. Press the back of your knee downward.
4. This will tighten the muscle on the top of your thigh and move your knee as shown.
5. 10 repetitions, 2 sets

## Pre-Operative Hip or Knee Replacement Exercises



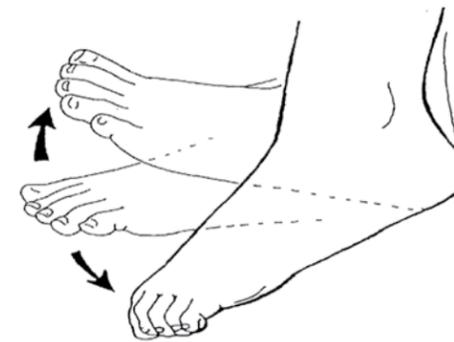
### Exercise 4

1. Place rubber tubing around legs in figure 8 fashion.
2. Sit in chair with knees bent as shown.
3. Bend each hip to lift foot off floor.
4. 20 repetitions, 2 sets

## Pre-Operative Hip or Knee Replacement Exercises

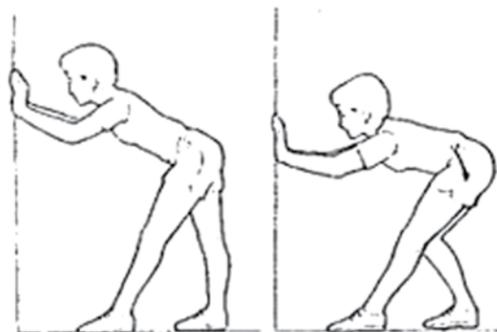
The first exercise, ankle pumps should be performed at least every hour whenever you are awake. Start in the recovery room.

During your hospital stay, a physical therapist will assist you in performing the following exercises. You will progress to perform some or all of these exercises independently.



### Ankle Pumps

1. Bend ankle up toward your body as far as possible.
2. Now point toes away from your body.
3. 25 repetitions, every hour while you are awake.

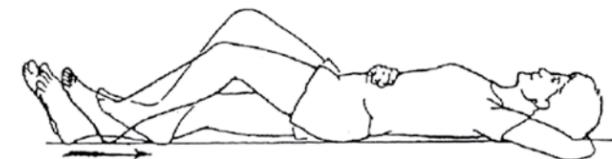


### Exercise 5

1. Stand against wall as shown, with each alternate leg forward and straight.
2. Bend the opposite knee, lowering your buttocks downward, while keeping the forward leg straight, so that stretch is felt.
3. Hold 10 seconds.
4. 10 repetitions, 2 sets

### Heel Slides

1. Lie flat on your back.
2. Slide heel toward your buttocks, bending the knee.
3. Slowly lower.
4. Repeat 10-20 times per leg.

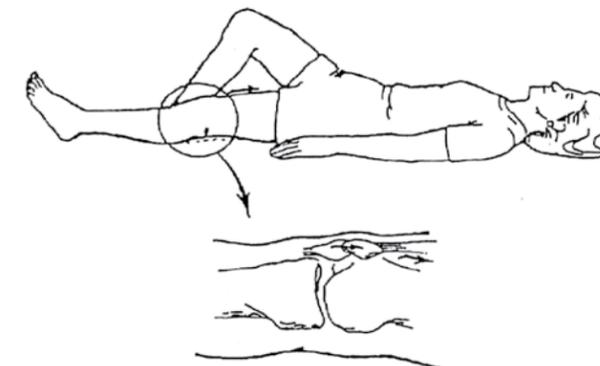


### Exercise 6

1. Sit on chair or table.
2. Place rubber tubing around knees as shown.
3. Spread knees apart as far as possible.
4. Hold 3 seconds, slowly relax.
5. 10 repetitions, 2 sets

### Quadricep Sets

1. Sit or lie on your back with your leg straight.
2. Press the back of your knee downward.
3. This will tighten the muscle on top of your thigh and move your kneecap as shown.
4. Hold for 10 seconds.
5. Repeat 10-20 times per leg.



### Stationary Bike

If you have access to a bike, begin riding for short periods of time throughout the weeks prior to your surgery.

### Walking

Walking outside on even surfaces is an excellent way to prepare your body for a successful recovery.

**Please begin Exercise Program once you receive exercises. A total of 30 minutes of exercise a day is important and can be completed in any increment as tolerated.**









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