

Pre-Operative Physical Therapy

The first week after your total knee replacement is a very important part of your recovery. We want you to focus on the following items:

Pain control:

- Use your medications as directed by your surgeon. They may tell you to stay ahead of the pain. This means taking your medications **before** your pain becomes worse.

Swelling/Edema control:

- You may notice a lot of swelling around your knee and even down into your ankle and foot. It is a good idea to elevate your leg for 30 minutes three times a day or more. We recommend being flat on your back with your leg well above your heart on pillows. Your ankle should be above your knee, and knee above your hip. If your leg is uncomfortable, try repositioning it or adjusting the pillows.
- Cold pack application is also important for both pain and swelling control. At least 15-20 minutes duration is recommended. 4-5 applications per day. It is a great idea to apply a cold pack during leg elevation.
- Ankle pumps throughout the day will also help minimize swelling and maintain good blood flow through your lower leg. There is no limit to how many you should do, however consider at least 15-20 repetitions, numerous times per day. Try to move your ankle through full range of motion.

Knee Range of Motion:

- Knees can stiffen up very quickly after surgery. It is very important you move your knee often throughout the day. We recommend 10 seated heel slides every 1-2 hours during the day. Your therapist will show you this exercise.
- Try to walk a few minutes every hour. Work on bending your knee as it comes forward and straightening the knee before the foot comes down to the floor. In other words, try to move the leg as naturally as possible. Use your walker.

As you can see there is a lot to consider during the first week after your surgery. Patients often do very well if they control the pain and swelling and move the knee throughout the day. Avoid keeping the knee still for long periods of time. If watching TV, a good idea, for example, is to do move your knee during commercials.

GAIT WITH FRONT WHEELED WALKER (FWW) - WEIGHT BEARING AS TOLERATED (WBAT) - "STEP TO" PATTERN



Move the walker forward and then take a step into the frame with your affected leg.

Next, push down with your arms and step forward with your unaffected leg so that it lines up with the other leg. Repeat.

You can bear as much weight on your affected leg as you feel comfortable.

Video # VVTDYG3HW



Cane Education: Walking Part 1

Unless told otherwise, use the cane on the side opposite your injured leg.

1. Put all your weight on your uninjured leg. Get your balance. Move the cane and your injured leg forward.



TRANSFER - STAND TO SIT - LEG PROTECTION

Walk over to the chair with your walker and turn so that the back of your legs touch the seat.

Next, take a small step forward with the affected leg and reach back with your hand (opposite the affected leg) to hold the chair as you lower yourself to sit. Your affected leg should slide forward as you sit.

***If you had a total hip replacement, then be sure not to bend past 90 degrees at your hip while performing.

Stair Training

Stairs with Single Point Cane or Crutch

Ascending Steps:

Step up with the unaffected/non-surgical (good) foot first and then raise up your body, then move your affected leg and cane/crutch to the same step.

Repeat

Descending Steps:

Step down the affected/surgical (bad) foot and the cane/crutch first and then lower your body and your unaffected leg to the same step.

Repeat

Tip:

As an easy way to remember, think “up with the good and down with the bad”.



Stairs with a Walker



Walker Education: Up Stairs Part 3

Support your weight evenly between the handrail and walker. Step up with your unaffected leg.



Walker Education: Down Stairs Part 3

Support your weight evenly between the handrail and your walker. Slowly bring your unaffected leg down. Then move the walker down to the next step. Repeat these motions until you reach the bottom of the stairs, and unfold your walker.

Exercises to do after you go home and before you start your Physical Therapy Treatment



QUAD SET - KNEE EXTENSION STRETCH - SEATED

While sitting, tighten your top thigh muscle to press the back of your knee downward towards the ground.

You should feel a gentle stretch in the back of your knee.

Repeat 10 Times
Hold 10 Seconds
Complete 1 Set
Perform 5 Times a Day



HEEL SLIDES - SELF ASSISTED

While seated, slide your heel towards your buttock with the assist of the unaffected leg.

Video # VVQPKY7N7

Repeat 10 Times
Hold 10 Seconds
Complete 1 Set
Perform 5 Times a Day



SUPINE HEEL SLIDES - AAROM

While lying on your back place a belt, towel, strap or bed sheet around your foot and start by pulling with your arms to bend your knee into a bent position. Then allow your knee to straighten back out to starting position and repeat.

Video # VVYGK8MVT

Repeat 10 Times
Hold 10 Seconds
Complete 1 Set
Perform 5 Times a Day



