

PATIENT INFORMATION

A publication of Jackson-Madison County General Hospital Surgical Services

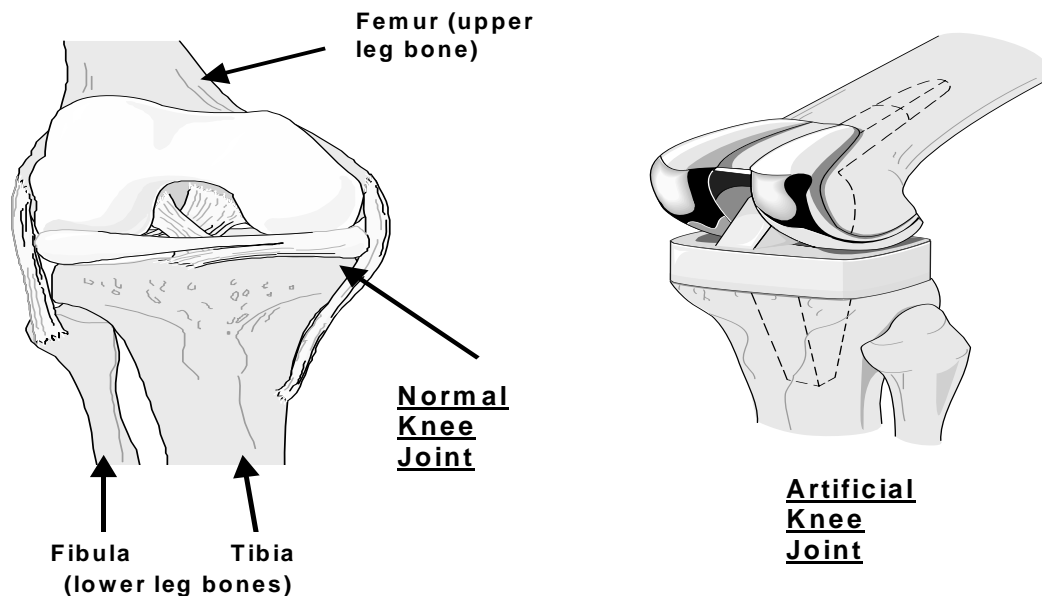
Total Knee Replacement Surgery

You are scheduled to have total knee replacement surgery. The purpose of this handout is to help you know how to prepare for your surgery and what to expect the day of your surgery.

It is the hope of the surgery staff that you will feel that you receive very good care while you are a patient in our hospital. **We are here to serve you!** Please feel free to ask any questions that you might have.

What is a total knee replacement? Why is it done?

A total knee replacement is a major surgery that is done to replace a damaged knee joint and replace it with a new artificial joint made of metal and plastic. The knee joint may have been damaged from an injury or from arthritis. A total knee replacement is done when the knee joint is damaged to the point that there is no cartilage (cushion) present and the patient is very limited in walking or is having severe pain.



What do I need to do before my surgery?

- Shower the night before your surgery and in the morning before you come to the hospital with the special soap you will be given.
- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight the night before your surgery.
- Please do not chew gum. (This raises the level of acid in your stomach.)
- You may brush your teeth and rinse your mouth as long as you do not swallow any water.
- If you take medicine for your heart, blood pressure, or asthma you may take this with a small sip of water before you come to the hospital. If you take medicine and/or insulin for diabetes you need to ask your doctor if you should take this.
- Remove all fingernail polish.

- Remove all jewelry including body piercings.
- Do not wear any makeup.
- If you will be checking into the hospital on the day of your surgery:
 - Bring all medicines that you are taking to the hospital with you.
 - Do not bring valuables or large amounts of money with you to the hospital.
 - Have a responsible adult drive you to the hospital and stay during your surgery.

What can I expect the day of surgery?

- If you are checking into the hospital on the day of your surgery, after you have been to the Admitting Office, you will be taken to a room. This may not be the room where you will be taken after surgery.
- You will be given a hospital gown and asked to remove all of your clothes including underwear and socks. Put on the gown opening in the back.
- You will be asked to remove all jewelry, glasses, hairpieces, contact lenses, dentures, prosthesis, and hearing aids.
- You will be asked questions about your medical history. Many of these will be the same questions that you have already been asked. Please know that we need to ask these again so that we can give you the best possible care.
- You may go straight to the operating room or you may go to the Pre-Anesthesia Unit (PAU). If you go to the PAU, you will be there for about one hour before your surgery.
- Your nurse will tell your family where to wait.
- You will be asked several times on which knee the doctor is going to operate. This knee will have a mark placed on it with a special pen.
- Your leg will be shaved and washed. It will be wrapped in towels.
- You will have an IV (needle in your arm for fluids) started and you will be given medicine that will help you relax.
- Someone from anesthesia will talk with you about your health history and the type of anesthesia that will be used. Your doctor will talk with you about which type of anesthesia is best for you. There are two types of anesthesia that can be used:
 - If spinal anesthesia is used, the anesthesiologist will place a needle into your back. The needle will then be removed and a small tube will be left through which to give your numbing medicine. With this type of anesthesia you will be completely numb from the waist down. You will also be given medicine in your IV that will help you to relax.
 - If general anesthesia is used, the anesthesiologist will give you medicine in your IV that will make you go to sleep for the entire surgery. This will be given in the operating room when your doctor is ready to begin your surgery.
- You will be taken to the operating room. This room will be cold and your nurse will give you a warm blanket.
- The operating room staff will include your doctor, his assistant, an anesthesiologist (the person who will give your anesthesia medicine), a circulating nurse, and a scrub nurse. All of these people are there to care for you and no one else.
- You will have sticky pads placed on your chest so that the staff can watch your heart. A blood pressure cuff will be placed on your arm so that your blood pressure can be checked. A device called a pulse oximeter will be put on your finger. It will tell how much oxygen is in your blood.
- The anesthesiologist will put a soft mask over your face. This will give you plenty of oxygen.
- Your anesthesiologist will give you medicine. No matter what type of anesthesia is used, you will not feel any pain during your surgery.

- After your surgery starts, the nurse will call your family and tell them how you are doing. The nurse will call your family at least one time an hour. This surgery usually takes from one to three hours.
- You will have a catheter (tube) placed into your bladder to drain your urine. You will still have this when you wake up. Your doctor will decide when this can be taken out.
- When the surgery is over, the anesthetist will give you medicine that will help you wake up. You will go to the Recovery Room. You will be in this room for about an hour. The doctor will talk with your family.
- You will have your blood pressure, pulse, temperature, and oxygen level checked. The nurse will check your dressing for any signs of bleeding and will feel the pulse and temperature in your feet.
- You can expect to have a thick, heavy bandage on your leg. You may also have on a knee immobilizer that will keep you from bending your leg.
- You may have a drainage tube at your incision site to collect blood or drainage.
- If you are in pain or if you feel sick to your stomach, please tell the nurse so that you can be given medicine.
- When you are awake you will be taken to your room. There will be a nurse caring for you in your room who will be checking you often.
- The nurse will help you turn in bed and take frequent deep breaths and cough. It is recommended that you turn, cough, and deep breathe at least every two hours. It is important that you do these things to keep your lungs clear and avoid getting pneumonia.
- When you are fully awake, if you are not sick to your stomach, you will be given something to drink and later something to eat.
- Do not try to get out of the bed. Your doctor will tell you when you can be out of bed for the first time and the staff will help you get up.
- In some cases the doctor may order the use of a machine on your leg called a Continuous Passive Motion (CPM) machine. This piece of equipment is sometimes used to keep your knee joint loose (flexible). If your doctor orders this for you, ask your nurse for a copy of the teaching sheet "Continuous Passive Motion."
- In most cases, the day after surgery, you will be helped out of bed. You will begin physical therapy on your knee. This will be painful. It is recommended that you take your pain medicine before your therapy.
- Most people are in the hospital for about four days. After this, you may be sent home to continue your therapy as an outpatient. In some cases your doctor may recommend that you go to a Rehabilitation Unit after your stay in the hospital to get additional care and teaching for a few days before you go home.

We are a tobacco-free property. No smoking or tobacco use on our campus.

Knee Replacement Home Care Guidelines

To keep your prosthesis (knee replacement) in place, follow these basic rules for three to six months after surgery. Your doctor or therapist will give you additional or special rules based on your personal needs.

- Follow the advice given to you by your doctor and therapists. Use crutches, a cane, or a walker as ordered to keep weight off your knee as it heals. You will be shown how to walk and how much weight to put on your new knee. You will also be taught what type of exercises that you need to do.
- Sit in a firm, straight-backed chair with armrests and a raised seat.
- Do not cross your legs.
- When standing, keep toes pointed out in front of you or just a little to the outside.
- To sit down, sit on the edge of the chair and scoot back.
- To stand up, scoot forward to the edge of the chair and stand using your arms to help.
- Do not sit on a low chair or toilet seat. You can use a firm cushion in a chair. If your toilet is low, you will need to get a toilet extender or a bedside commode.
- For a shower, you need a grab bar for safety or an elevated tub seat to sit in.
- Use handrails when going up or down stairs or inclined areas.
- Wear low-heeled shoes. Tie-on shoes are best.
- If you need help in preventing falls, ask your nurse for the handout "Preventing Falls."

Wound Care:

- Keep your incision site clean and dry.
- Avoid positions that put stress on your incision.
- You will need to clean your incision(s) with a mild soap (such as Dial®) and water every day while bathing. Showers are permitted, but tub baths should be avoided for six weeks. Use a separate clean washcloth for each incision. Clean each incision with a soapy washcloth. Either use another clean washcloth to rinse your incision(s) or let the water from the shower rinse them off. Do not use any powder, lotion, ointment, dye, or perfume close to your incisions.

Call your doctor if you have:

- Redness, warmth, or swelling around the incision site.
- Drainage from the incision.
- Chills and/or fever of more than 100.5° twice.
- Pain not controlled by your pain medicine or increasing pain.
- A clicking or popping sound in your joint or if you have a sudden sharp pain.
- Loss of control of your leg.
- Tingling in your leg or if your leg feels numb or cold.
- Trouble breathing, shortness of breath, or if you cough up blood.

An important precaution:

You will need antibiotics before and after having teeth pulled, any work done on your teeth including teeth cleaning, and any other surgery.

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