

Your Joint Replacement

WHAT TO EXPECT THE FIRST MONTH

Review your discharge instructions

- Call your surgeon's office or nurse navigator with any questions.
- When you are ready to drive, call your surgeon's office for clearance.
 - > You must be completely off narcotic pain medications in order to drive.

Swelling is normal after surgery.

- Ice the new joint for 20 minutes every 2 hours while awake.
- Do not put ice or the cryocuff directly onto your skin
- Protect your skin by using a barrier between your bare skin and the ice pack or cryocuff
- Additionally, do not ice or use cryotherapy overnight because of an increased risk for frostbite

You will have some pain and discomfort after your surgery.

- Continue to take your medications as prescribed by your surgeon.
- Taper off narcotics as soon as you can tolerate doing so with a goal of using only Tylenol for pain, as needed
- Do not exceed more than 3 grams of Tylenol per day to prevent liver toxicity

You may experience constipation after your surgery.

- This is normal because the narcotics and medications given during your surgery can contribute to constipation.
- Drink plenty of water and add fiber into your diet
- Use stool softeners and/or laxatives as directed by your surgeon
- Call your surgeon if you:
 - > Are unable to have a bowel movement
 - > Are profoundly distended
 - > Are not passing gas
 - > Have abdominal pain and/or nausea

It is important to be active after your surgery.

- Attempt to walk every hour while awake.
- Take your prescribed medication as directed by your surgeon to decrease your risk for blood clots.



Take care of your surgical bandage per your surgeon.

- Avoid tub bathing, hot tubs, swimming pools, etc. until cleared by your surgeon.

Call your orthopedic surgeon immediately for any of the following concerns:

- Your operative leg is severely swollen
- You experience a temperature of 100.5F or greater after the first week of surgery
- You are in extreme pain despite taking the prescribed medications and/or your pain increases over time
- You have severe tenderness in your calf
- You are short of breath
- There is increased redness, purulent (yellow, tan, odorous) drainage from your incision and/or bleeding from and around your incision
- You think you have dislocated your operative joint
- Your knee was replaced and you have not achieved at least 90 degrees of flexing within 10 days post-surgery

Call your primary care doctor for routine issues not related to your surgery:

- Common cold, flu symptoms, sore throat, nausea, migraines, minor pain not related to your surgery and/or for any other additional concerns
- Coordination with other specialists
- Medical management of your case and a medication review if needed

Immediately call 911 and go to an emergency department for life-threatening issues:

- Chest pain
- Difficulty breathing
- Severe dizziness
- Sudden neurological changes such as speech difficulty, facial drooping or arm weakness/numbness

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