

Total Knee Joint Replacement Rehabilitation

- Getting Into and Out of Bed
- Getting Into and Out of a Chair
- Getting Into and Out of a Car
- Post-Op Patient Home Exercise Program
- Occupational Therapy and Adaptive Equipment
- Dressing
- Using the Bathroom

Getting Into and Out of Bed

Your new knee needs extra care while it heals. Follow the tips on this sheet to help keep your new knee safe. The steps below help you get into bed. Reverse them to get out of bed.

Sitting down

- Stand with your back to the bed. Back up until the back of your non-surgical knee touches the bed.
- Keep the foot on your surgical leg forward slightly.
- Hold the walker with one hand.
- Reach back for the bed with the other hand.
- Lower your buttocks onto the bed slowly.

Supporting yourself

- Put both your hands on the bed behind you for support.
- Lean backward onto the bed.

Lying down

- Swing one leg, then the other, from the floor onto the bed. As you do, use your elbows and hands to lower your upper body onto the bed.
- Position yourself comfortably.
- Keep your walker within easy reach of your bed.



Sleeping positions

Your new knee needs extra care while it heals. Use the tips on this sheet to help keep your new knee safe while sleeping. Be sure to follow any guidelines from your health care provider.

- Find a position that keeps your knee safe and comfortable.
- Follow your health care provider's instructions about which side to sleep on. Generally, you will be most comfortable on your back or on the non-surgical side.
- When lying on your side, use pillows between the knees for comfort (see photo)
- When lying on your back, try to avoid a pillow beneath your surgical knee as this can lead to difficulty achieving full extension (straightening) of your knee as it heals. However, placing a small pillow just under your heel can provide a nice, gentle passive stretch. Your therapist can instruct you on how to do this before you go home.



Getting Into and Out of a Chair

Sitting down

- Back up until the edge of the chair touches the back of your good leg. Keep your foot of the surgical leg slightly forward.
- Reach back (one hand at a time) for the armrests of the chair.
- Lower yourself onto the seat gently.

Lean back in the chair and scoot to where you are comfortable.



Getting up

- Scoot to the front edge of the chair.
- Put both hands on the armrests or sides of the chair. Push up with both hands and your good leg to stand up. If you struggle to stand from a lower chair, consider placing a cushion or pillows in your chair.
- Get your balance. Then put your hands, one at a time, on the walker. Before you begin to walk, be sure you are not dizzy.

Getting Into and Out of a Car

After knee surgery, getting into or out of a car can be difficult. To keep your knee safe, follow the tips on this sheet. The steps below help you get into a car. Reverse them to get out of a car.

Before getting into a car

- Have someone move the seat as far back as it will go.
- Place a pillow on the seat, especially if the seat is low. This makes it easier to get out of the car again.

Sit down

- Back up to the car seat until you feel the car touching the back of your legs. Keep your surgical leg slightly forward.
- Hold onto the side of the car and the walker or dashboard.
- Lower yourself slowly onto the seat. Watch your head.

Bring your legs into the car

- Slide back into the center of the seat.
- Lift your legs one at a time into the car. As you do so, move your body.

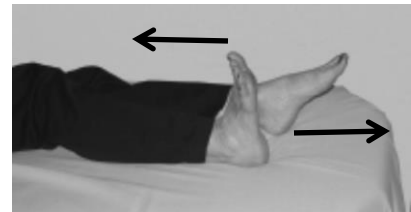


Post-Op Patient Home Exercise Program

Supine lying (Lying Flat on your back) exercises

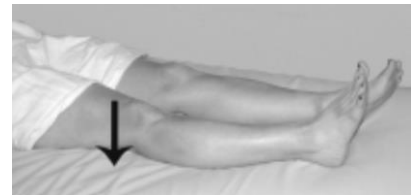
Ankle pumps

- Move both feet up and down at the ankle.
- Repeat 10 times per hour.



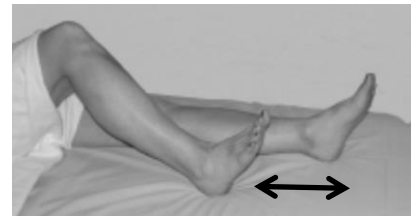
Quad sets-knee extension

- Lie on your back.
- Press surgical knee into mat, tightening muscle on front of thigh.
- Hold 5 counts. Do NOT hold breath.
- Repeat 10 times, 3-4 times daily.



Heel slides (knee & hip flexion)

- Lie on your back, slide heel of surgical leg toward your bottom, and then slide back down to bed.
- Repeat 10 times, 3-4 times daily.



Straight leg raises

- Bend your unoperated leg and place your foot on the bed.
- Keep your operated leg straight and slowly raise it 6-12 inches off the bed.
- Slowly return your leg to the bed.
- Repeat 10 times, 3-4 times daily.



Short arc quads-knee extension

- Lie on your back, towel roll under your surgical thigh.
- Lift foot, straightening knee.
- Do not raise thigh off roll.
- Repeat 10 times, 3-4 times daily.



Seated Post-Op Patient Home Exercise Program

Long arc quads (LAQ's)

- Sit with your back straight and feet flat on the floor.
- Slowly lift your foot up off the floor and straighten your leg without lifting your thigh off the surface on which you are sitting.
- Return your leg to the starting position.
- Perform the exercises 10 times, 3-4 times daily.



Seated knee extension stretch

- Sit with heel propped on another chair.
- Allow knee to hang in a straight position.
- Rest knee in this straight position for up to 1 hour with knee flexion stretch (as in #4 below) every 5-10 minutes

Knee flexion (bending)

- Sit with your back straight.
- Bend your knee and pull your foot back as far as you can.
- Hold for a count of 5 (as able).
- Perform 10 times, 3-4 times daily.



Knee flexion stretch

- Perform as in knee flexion above.
- Once knee is bent backward underneath you or in a flexed position, hold it there.
- Shift hips forward to feel a stretch in the knee.
- Hold knee in a flexed position for 30 seconds.
- Repeat 3-4 times daily or with seated knee extension stretch.

Occupational Therapy and Adaptive Equipment for Bathing, Dressing, and Reach

Your doctor may order Occupational Therapy (OT) to promote your safe return to independence in activities of daily living (ADLs). Your OT will help you to plan and identify safe and reasonable options for bathing, dressing and reaching in the weeks following surgery. Use of Adaptive Equipment (AE) may be your best option for safe, independent self-care activity following knee surgery. You may already be using dressing equipment if your pain/disability has been significant.

Here is a list of commonly used bathing/dressing equipment following knee surgery. Please note that the reacher, dressing stick, and sock aid are the most frequently requested items:

Reacher

- May be used to remove pants, underpants, socks, and shoes.
- Can be used to put on pants, underpants, and help with shoes.
- Can pick things off the floor or far away from you.
- Can be used to hold tongue of shoes when inserting toe into shoes.

Sock aid (terry cloth or plastic)

- Used to put on socks or TED hose without bending over.

Long shoehorn (stainless or plastic)

- Used to put on shoes.

EZ stick

- A combination of long handled shoehorn and dressing stick.
- Used to remove TED hose and put on shoes.

Dressing stick

- Can be used to put on pants, and underpants.
- Can be used to remove socks, shoes, pants, and underpants.

Elastic shoelaces

- Turns tie shoes into slip-on shoes and keeps shoes tight.
- Works best when using shoehorn.

Long handled sponge

- Used for bathing lower body or back.

Medicare or other medical insurance does NOT cover Adaptive Equipment. We can help you to anticipate costs and to find resources for needed equipment. Know that AE is available at most medical supply stores or medical supply aisles of large discount stores. You may know of someone who has equipment to lend. You may know of a charitable organization that makes such equipment available through a loan closet. Our own MercyOne Home Therapy Shoppe is a resource for pricing and identifying AE options.

Ask your Occupational Therapist for further suggestions on equipment:

- To allow better reach for toileting.
- To assist moving your leg with transfers.
- To gather and move items around your home.

Dressing

To protect your knee, you must learn safe ways to do daily tasks. This includes getting dressed and undressed. Your health care provider may suggest tools to help you. These include a reacher, sock aid, and dressing stick.

Putting on socks

- Sit on a chair or on the side of the bed.
- Pull the sock onto the sock aid as you have been shown.
- Hold the sock in front of the foot on your operated side. Slip your foot into the sock.
- Pull the sock aid out of the sock.
- Put the other sock on with the sock aid or bring your foot toward you and slip the sock on with your hands.



Putting on pants

- Sit on a chair or the side of the bed.
- Using a reacher, catch the waist of the underwear or pants with the grasper.
- Slip the pants onto your operated leg first.
- Then slip your other leg into the pants.
- Use the reacher to pull the pants over your feet and above your knee. Pull them to where you can reach them with your hands.
- Hold the pants with one hand. Push up from the chair to stand. Steady yourself with your walker.
- With your hands, pull the pants the rest of the way up.



Putting on shoes

- Wear slip-on shoes or use elastic or velcro shoelaces so you don't have to bend.
- Sit on a chair. Put your foot into the shoe. Use a reacher or long-handled shoehorn to pull the shoe on.

Using the Bathroom

Note: Try to make sure surfaces are dry before you walk on them. Non-skid mats can help prevent falls.

Using the bathroom can be challenging after knee surgery. A shower chair, handrails, a shower hose, and a long-handled brush or sponge can be helpful. Follow the tips on this sheet to keep your new knee safe when showering, bathing, and using the toilet.

Special shower chairs and tub benches are available for use while bathing. These chairs help you bathe safely. Ask your health care provider where you can get one.

Getting into a shower stall

- Back up over the lip of the shower stall with your good leg until you feel the shower chair behind you. Reach back for the shower chair first with one hand, then the other, as you begin to sit down.
- Lower yourself onto the chair. Lift each foot and turn to face the faucet.



Getting into a tub

- Back up until you feel the tub bench behind you. Reach back for the bench first with one hand, then the other, as you begin to sit down.
- Lower yourself onto the bench and turn to face the faucet. Use your hands to help lift each leg over the side of the tub. A hand-held shower nozzle can make bathing on a bench easier.



Using the toilet

Using the bathroom can be challenging after knee surgery. Follow the tips on this sheet to keep your new knee safe when using the toilet.

- Back up until you feel the toilet touch the back of your legs.
- Place your operated leg slightly forward.
- Look behind you and grasp the grab bar (or side rails, if you're using a toilet with rails).
- Lower yourself onto the front of the toilet, then scoot back.
- To get up, reverse these steps.

