



JOINT REPLACEMENT SURGERY RECOVERY

Recovering from joint replacement surgery will look different for everyone. Your age, physical health, and health history can all impact your recovery journey.

Make Your Recovery Easier

There are things you can do before surgery to help make your recovery easier.

Get plenty of exercise. Light exercises will help improve your strength, range of motion and endurance, enhancing your chances for a successful outcome and recovery. Talk with your surgeon prior to surgery about getting a physical therapy referral and ask the therapist to provide you with an appropriate exercise program.

Eat a well-balanced diet. Healthy eating and proper nutrition before your surgery can help with the healing process. Make sure to eat lots of foods that are high in fiber, iron and vitamin C. Get plenty of calcium by incorporating milk, cheese, yogurt, and dark leafy greens into your diet.

In the days before your surgery, eat light meals and drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated.

Monitor your medications. Your doctor will inform you of any medications you should stop taking before surgery.

Preparing Your Home for Recovery

Your home may contain obstacles you don't normally notice. Some steps you can take to make your home safer include:

- Moving obstacles to create a clear path between your bedroom, bathroom and kitchen, allowing you to easily move around with a walker or crutches.
- Preparing your bathroom with an elevated toilet seat, shower chair and handrails.
- Obtaining a comfortable chair that keeps your knees lower than your hips.
- Relocating frequently used items to easy-to-reach areas.
- Ensuring handrails at your stairs (if you have them) are secure. If you don't have handrails for your stairs, consider installing some.
- Arranging for someone to help you with cleaning, laundry, collecting mail and driving.
- Freezing pre-made meals ahead of your surgery and stocking up on non-perishable foods.



After Your Surgery

You'll need the help of a walker, crutches or a cane following your surgery. It is highly recommended you contact your insurance company to find out what equipment is covered under your policy.

You probably will also begin to work with a physical therapist on an exercise plan to aid you on your road to a full recovery.

Physical Therapy

Physical therapy can help you both prepare for and recover from joint replacement surgery. Your physical therapist will create an exercise plan for you based on your needs and abilities. These exercises will likely include the following.

Range-of-Motion Exercises

These exercises are aimed at improving movement of the affected joint so you can perform your daily activities more easily.

Strengthening Exercises

These exercises are designed to increase muscle strength surrounding the joint, enabling you to walk without a cane or crutches and use your arms more easily.

Functional Training

This training helps you regain the ability to perform activities you were able to do before pain developed in the joint that was replaced.

Body Awareness and Balance Training

These activities are designed to get you re-accustomed to navigating uneven surfaces, such as sidewalks and dirt paths. They might include practicing turning and changing directions, or using certain tools designed to improve your balance. These activities are typically employed following lower body joint replacements.

Activity-Specific Training

This training includes exercises to help you perform daily tasks of living, as well as any necessary job activities.

Choose PT. "Physical Therapy Guide to Total Knee Replacement (Arthroplasty)

Accessed at <https://www.choosept.com/symptomsconditionsdetail/physical-therapy-guide-to-total-knee-replacement>

National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases. "Joint Replacement Surgery"

Accessed at <https://www.niams.nih.gov/health-topics/joint-replacement-surgery>

Cleveland Clinic. "A Patient's Guide to Total Joint Replacement and Complete Care"

Accessed at <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/-/scassets/files/org/orthopaedics-rheumatology/joint-replacement-guides/total-joint-replacement-patient-guide.ashx?la=en>