

Instructions after Knee Replacement Surgery

Activity

- You may bear weight on your leg as you find comfortable, using crutches or a walker as needed. This will initially be uncomfortable but will improve with time.
- Use the knee immobilizer when walking until you are able to do a straight leg raise, this usually is not necessary after discharge from the hospital.
- Use the cryo-cuff for 2 or more days as you find helpful
- Gently bend and straighten your knee as comfort allows several times a day with a goal of making your leg completely straight and bending to 100 degrees. Bending can be done by hanging your leg off the side of a bed or couch and using your un-operated leg to pull your operated ankle back. Placing your foot on a stool and pressing down on your knee or thigh can help straighten your knee.
- Many patients will have home physical therapy which will be able to guide a home exercise program
- Swelling of your leg is very common after knee replacement. To help reduce swelling elevate your leg above the level of your heart several times a day and wear your elastic stockings, especially during the day.
- Do not drive until after cleared by your surgeon, for most patients 4 to 6 weeks after surgery
- Discuss return to work or other activities at your follow-up

Wound Care

- Keep your dressing dry
- You may remove your dressing 2 days and shower 5 days after surgery. Don't scrub the incision, but you may let water run over it
- Notify your doctor if you have a change in your incision, such as increased bleeding or drainage.

Medications

- Use the prescription(s) as given after surgery
- If the prescription is too strong you may take acetaminophen (Tylenol) 325 to 1000 mg every 6 to 8 hours, and/or an anti-inflammatory medicine such as ibuprofen (Advil or Motrin) 400 to 800 mg every 8 hours, or Aleve 220 mg every 12 hours, if allowed by your doctor
- You will be placed on a blood thinning medication after surgery. It is important to take the medication as instructed.

Follow-up

- Call MaineOrtho at 774-5113 after surgery to make an appointment for 10 to 14 days after surgery
- Call for an earlier appointment if you experience severe pain, swelling, redness or fever after surgery
- 24 hour coverage is available for emergencies at 774-5113