

Knee replacement and rehabilitation

Your questions answered



Q: What activities can I participate in once I recover? What should I avoid?

A: After you fully recover from knee replacement surgery, you may be able to enjoy many activities that you have given up because of your knee pain. However, not all activities are recommended for knee replacement patients, so please talk to your orthopaedic surgeon for advice.

Activities you may be able to pursue (not a complete list):

- Walking
- Bike riding
- Golf
- Moderate hiking
- Dancing
- Doubles tennis
- Rowing
- Bowling
- Yoga
- Boating/canoeing
- Swimming (once your incision has completely healed)

Activities you should avoid (not a complete list):

- Running/jogging
- Team sports
- High-impact aerobics
- Jumping
- Downhill skiing
- Singles tennis
- Racquetball
- Moving or lifting heavy objects
- Any other high-impact sport that may cause knee stress

Q: Will I feel my knee implant during daily movements?

A: It varies from person to person, but expect your knee to feel a little different than your natural knee. You have a new device made of plastic and metal that has replaced the largest joint in your body—it's only normal for it to feel a little different.

Q: What are the safest sleeping positions?

A: You can safely sleep in just about any position that is most comfortable for you, whether it be on your back, on your stomach, or on your side.

Q: Can I have an MRI after my knee replacement surgery?

A: MRI, or magnetic resonance imaging, is used as a diagnostic tool for many types of medical conditions. People with knee replacement implants, however, may not be able to have an MRI due to the metal contained within their implant. Check with your doctor to learn more about whether or not you can have an MRI. For more information, visit www.mrisafety.com.

Q: When can I resume sexual activity?

A: Sexual activity can be resumed at any time as long as all knee precautions mentioned by your surgeon are kept in mind.

Q: Do I need to take any precautions before future medical procedures?

A: From now on, you must inform any doctors (including dentists) treating you that you have undergone knee replacement surgery. More than likely, antibiotics will be prescribed to avoid infection.

Q: I live by myself. Whom can I turn to for help during recovery and rehabilitation?

A: You will likely need assistance with your daily activities for several days to a few weeks following your knee replacement surgery. If you live alone, speak with your surgeon about being admitted to a rehabilitation facility for at least a few days following your surgery so you can get the assistance you need.

Q: Where can my caregiver find more information?

A: Understanding your caregiver's role is very important to your successful knee replacement surgery. More information can be found for caregivers at www.kneereplacement.com or www.strengthforcaring.com.

Q: Where can I find more information?

A: For more detailed information on your knee implant, as well as recovery and rehabilitation information, visit www.kneereplacement.com.

Important safety information

As with any medical treatment, individual results may vary. The performance of a knee replacement depends on age, weight, activity level and other factors. There are potential risks, and recovery takes time. People with conditions that limit rehabilitation, should not have this surgery. Only an orthopaedic surgeon can tell if knee replacement is right for you.

REFERENCES

1. American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons
<http://orthoinfo.aaos.org/topic.cfm?topic=A00389>
2. Data on file at DePuy Orthopaedics, Inc., 2008

To learn more about knee replacement, visit www.kneereplacement.com

This information is intended only for patients in the United States.

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Frequently asked questions about knee replacement

Q: What can I expect immediately after surgery?

A: Following surgery, you may gradually increase your activity by walking and stretching to expand your knee's range of motion. You'll need to work diligently these first few weeks to regain motion and avoid stiffness in your knee. All patients with a knee replacement will have some pain with physical therapy. It is extremely important to continue your exercises after you have been discharged from the hospital. Be sure to inform your surgeon of your pain.



Q: When will I begin physical therapy?

A: You will begin physical therapy before you leave the hospital, and likely within a day of your surgery. The exercises your physical therapist will put you through will likely be uncomfortable or possibly painful for the first several days. It's very important you continue the exercises to help you regain strength and mobility, as well as improve your muscle tone.

Q: What are the goals of rehabilitation?

A: The goals of rehabilitation are to:

- Improve your muscle strength
- Increase the movement in your knee joint
- Protect your new knee joint
- Help you resume most of your normal activities

Q: How long will I be in the hospital?

A: The typical hospital stay for knee replacement surgery is three to five days. Some patients will stay longer or shorter depending on their specific situation.

Q: Is there anything in particular I need to be aware of after surgery?

A: Infection is the most common complication following any surgery, so it's important that you pay attention to your incision site and properly care for it to avoid infection. When changing your bandages, look for any changes in the appearance of your incision. Check to see if there is drainage and/or a foul odor coming from the incision site. Also check to see if your knee area has become more swollen, tender or painful. If you experience any of these symptoms or if you develop a fever above 101° F for more than two days, contact your surgeon.

Q: How long will my recovery last? When can I resume my normal daily activities?

A: Rehabilitation and recovery take time and hard work. Each person is different and the length of recovery is dependent on your particular situation, overall health and your rehabilitation. Many people achieve recovery in three to six months. When your surgeon feels you are ready, you should be able to resume some, if not most of your normal daily activities.

Q: When can I return to work after knee replacement surgery?

A: Most people return to their jobs between six to eight weeks after surgery. Your surgeon will inform you when you can return to work.

Q: When can I begin driving?

A: Most patients can safely begin driving again in four to six weeks. Your surgeon will tell you when you can resume driving a car.

Q: How should I take care of my new knee replacement?

A: Knee replacements are designed for the normal activities of daily living. Avoiding trauma, overuse, unnecessary kneeling and squatting are all helpful in caring for your new knee replacement.

Q: How will the knee replacement affect my daily life?

A: More than 90% of individuals who undergo total knee replacement experience a reduction of knee pain and a significant improvement in the ability to perform common activities of daily living.¹

Q: Will my new knee set off metal detectors?

A: The sensitivity of every metal detector is different, and it's possible that your implant might cause the machine to go off.

Q: Is it possible that I'll need a knee replacement in my other knee?

A: 80% of knee pain sufferers experience pain in both knees² and the severity of pain varies with each patient. Talk to your orthopaedic surgeon if you begin experiencing pain in your other knee. Your surgeon will tell you if you should consider knee replacement surgery for your other knee.

