



JOINT REPLACEMENT SURGERY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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PRE-OPERATIVE QUESTIONS

1. When will the hospital call me about my surgery time?
The hospital will call you 24-48 hours prior to your surgery to provide you with the time of your procedure.

POST-OPERATIVE CARE QUESTIONS

2. What are precautions after hip replacement surgery?
Some precautions to follow after hip replacement surgery can be found below, they are organized by the type of surgical approach your surgeon used. Please verify the approach used in your appointment or with your surgeon's medical assistant.

Posterior Approach

- Do not cross your legs
- Do not turn your toes inward (pigeon-toed)
- Do not sit in low chairs or sofas, including a low toilet seat
- Do not lean towards the non-operated side
- Do not sit in a tub
- Do not bend your hip at an angle greater than 90 degrees

Anterior Approach

- Do not step backwards with the surgical leg
- Do not extend your hip
- Do not allow surgical leg to turn outward (externally rotate)
- Do not cross your legs
- Sleep on your surgical side when side-lying
- Use a pillow between your legs when rolling

3. How long after knee replacement do I wait before starting outpatient physical therapy?
It is routinely recommended that outpatient physical therapy be started within 5 days of your surgery.
4. Do I need physical therapy after a hip replacement?
Typically, you do not need physical therapy following a hip replacement. Your surgeon will prescribe physical therapy at your first office visit if he feels it is needed.
5. How long do I keep my surgical wound dressing on?
Typically, your surgical wound dressing should be left on your incision for a week if it is not draining. If you do happen to soak through the bandage, it is best to reinforce the dressing until the draining stops with clean gauze or bandages. If you have the Aquacel dressing this will stay on until your first post-operative visit.

6. What is the Aquacel Dressing?
The Aquacel dressing is surgical wound dressing that is a water-resistant barrier and allows you to shower the day after the surgery. A regular dressing is not water resistant like the Aquacel dressing.
7. When may I remove my surgical wound dressing and leave it off?
The surgical dressing needs to stay on for a week or longer after the surgery- your surgeon or their staff will provide specific directions following surgery.
8. When can I shower?
You may shower the day after you return home but you must keep your surgical wound dressing covered with saran wrap. If the dressing does get wet place a dry sterile dressing over the incision.
9. When can I take off the TED(Thrombo-Embolic-Deterrent) hose?
It is recommended that you wear your TED hose until your first office visit. You may take them off each day for an hour to rest your leg(s).
10. How long before/after my procedure can I have dental work?
If you are having a total joint procedure, we recommend routine dental work be done at least two weeks before your joint replacement surgery and six weeks after your joint replacement surgery.
11. Do I have to take antibiotics before I go to the dentist?
You do not need to take antibiotics prior to seeing the dentist unless you have an immunocompromising condition.
12. When may I drive after my procedure?
You may begin driving when you are no longer taking narcotic medications.
13. When can I stop using the oxygen that was sent home with me?
If your anesthesiologist sent you home with oxygen following your surgery, we recommend that you contact your primary care physician and inform them that you were sent home with the oxygen so that they may follow-up and assess you.
14. What should I do with the oxygen after I am done using it?
There is a phone number on the oxygen tank or provided to you by the hospital. You should not discontinue oxygen until your primary care physician has advised you. You will need an order from your primary care physician to show the hospital before they will collect it from you.

MEDICATION QUESTIONS

15. How do I refill my postoperative medication?

Requests for medication refills or changes in a medication can be made by calling our prescription line at 720-497-6662. This is a dedicated line, managed by a team of medical staff Monday – Friday.

Messages left on this line before 3:00 PM will be addressed the same day.

Refills on narcotic pain medications require that a prescription be written and then picked up at one of our offices by the patient, a family member or a friend. Prescriptions of narcotics will only be released to persons of at least 18 years old with a valid photo ID.

Medications cannot be refilled or changed after hours or on the weekend.

16. Why do I have to pick up my pain medication prescription at the office?

Per Colorado state and Federal laws, we are not permitted to send or call in prescriptions directly to pharmacies. You must take prescription signed by a physician or a physician's assistant to your pharmacy directly for them to fill.

17. When can I resume taking my supplements following surgery?

You may resume taking your supplements when you return home from your surgery.

18. How long after I take my blood thinners will they remain in my system?

Depending on the medication, it may take up to 12 days for blood thinners to completely clear out of your system.

19. What do I take if I experience constipation?

If you have previously taken medication for constipation, it is recommended that you take that medicine again. Alternatively, you may take Mira Lax which is an over the counter medication.

20. What can I take if I need help sleeping?

You may take over the counter Benadryl following the instructions printed on the packaging at bedtime.

21. Is it normal for my pain medication to make me nauseous?

Some patients do experience nausea after taking pain medication. We recommend that you take the medication with food – if you continue to experience nausea call the clinic and we will work with your pharmacy to give you medication for the nausea.

22. Can I take birth control medication before my surgery?

It is recommended that you **discontinue birth control pills one week before surgery**. Birth control pills have been shown to increase the risk of developing blood clots after surgery.

23. When and how can I stop using narcotic medications?

You may start to taper off of the narcotic medication when you feel like you do not need as much to manage your pain. Some methods are to wait longer than the recommended hours to take more medication or to take one pill instead of two; additionally, you may take Tylenol in between taking narcotic medication to manage pain.

24. May I take Ibuprofen after my surgery?

If you are on a blood thinner you are not to take any type of ASA (Aspirin) or NSAID (Ibuprofen). If not, you may take Ibuprofen.

25. Should I be concerned if I have a fever?

It is normal to run a low grade fever after surgery. It is recommended that you monitor your temperature; if it rises to or above 101^{oF} please call the office.

POST-OPERATIVE CONCERNS

26. Why can't I just speak with the physician?

Your physician may be in surgery or assisting other patients. Your physician does want all of your questions to be answered therefore he trains his team to assist you the best that they can. If they feel that you would best be served by a phone call from the physician then they will make sure your physician calls you.

27. How much bleeding after surgery is normal?

When you go home following surgery, there should only be minimal bleeding and drainage. Should you start to drain enough to change your dressing 2-3 times in one day, please call the office.

28. After hours are you able to call my doctor about problems I'm having?

After hours, there is a provider that we are able to consult concerning any questions you may have and who will provide specific directions for you. We advise that you call in the morning and speak with the clinical liaison if you have further questions.

29. Who can I contact about getting medical equipment?

On your discharge paperwork there will be a number for you to contact for any medical equipment you may need.

30. Is it normal to experience very little pain after surgery and then experience more pain weeks later?

It is normal to have some pain a few weeks after surgery, this is all a part of the healing process. This can be due to increased activity – including physical therapy.

31. I received injections (x) days ago. I am in more pain now than I was before the injection. Is this normal?

If you begin to experience more pain after an injection than you were in before you received the injection, please keep a log of your pain and call the office so that we can provide further guidance.

32. I am having swelling and pain around the injection site. Is this normal?

It is normal to experience some swelling and pain at your injection site. You may put ice on the area and take some Ibuprofen. If your symptoms continue to worsen or you experience other symptoms like nausea or the injection area feels hot to the touch, please call the office for further guidance.