

KNEE REPLACEMENT PATIENT HANDOUT

DR. CHRASTIL'S KNEE REPLACEMENT PATIENT HANDOUT

Six-Week Follow-Up Appointment

NORMAL RECOVERY AFTER A KNEE REPLACEMENT SURGERY

- You will have good days & bad days. Some day-to-day setbacks are NORMAL
- The location of pain may change day-to-day
- Some pain and swelling is still *EXPECTED*, although you should be noticing that it is *IMPROVING*
- You will continue to see substantial improvements over the next few months
- Your knee will feel warm for a minimum of 3 months but can be warm to touch for a full year
- Everyone has numbness around their incision, this will improve but there will always be some level of numbness on the outside aspect of your incision. This is normal.
- The average recovery times for knee replacement surgery:
 - 80% recovered at 3 months, 90% at 6 months, 100% at 1 to 1½ years
- Sleeping is still tough for everyone. It will improve but takes time. This is NORMAL

SIX-WEEK MEDICATIONS

- **Anti-inflammatories:** Meloxicam or Celebrex. You should now be out of your prescriptions for these. Let us know if you need another or you can transition to over the counter Aleve or Ibuprofen
- **Pain medications:** If you need an additional prescription let us know but you should be transitioning to completely off of these medications
- **Blood Thinners:** No longer needed from a knee replacement standpoint

PHYSICAL THERAPY:

- You should still be in your physical therapy program if you are not able to completely straighten your knee or you cannot flex it to at least 110 degrees
- There is a chance you have been discharged from formal physical therapy if you have met your range of motion or strength goals but even when this is the case you need to continue to train and exercise to reach the full potential of your knee replacement
- You should be doing your "Home Exercise Program" ***STILL A COUPLE TIMES WEEKLY*** as the daily home exercises are still important as you are continuing to get back to some more "normal" activities around home and work routines
- Your ultimate range of motion will vary depending on preoperative range of motion and adherence to the rehabilitation program
- The more motion and strength you are able to achieve over the next several months the happier you will be with your knee

RANGE OF MOTION GOALS:

- Expected range of motion and you or your therapist should contact your surgeon if questions
 - 6-12 weeks: -5 – 0 degrees of extension to 110 or 120 degrees of flexion
 - 12+ weeks: your ultimate range of motion will vary depending on preoperative range of motion and adherence to the rehabilitation program

ARE THERE PHYSICAL RESTRICTIONS?

- No formal physical restrictions following your replacement unless specified by your surgeon.
- You may advance activities as you and your new knee tolerates
- We do not recommend impact activities like long distance running, jumping, etc.
- We do encourage low impact exercises, biking, walking, elliptical, hiking, swimming, etc.
- Stamina and exercise duration will improve with time
- Golf is ok whenever you feel comfortable

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SURGICAL INCISION CARE:

- You may massage the incision. If it is sensitive it is actually GOOD to massage the incision to “desensitize” the newly healed skin
- You may now submerge your incision under water in a bath tub, hot tub, or pool
- You may now use lotions, Vitamin E oils, or other ointments on your incision. Dr Chrastil likes “silicone scar sheets” as they cover the incision to avoid sunlight and protect it from the back of your pants

SWELLING CONTROL:

- Swelling is normal for 3 months out from surgery but may last up to a full year. Swelling will improve with time. Some additional modalities for swelling control includes continued icing, compression, NSAIDs, and elevating the leg when able especially in the evenings.

RETURN TO WORK:

- If you need a note to return to work please let us know
- The exact date depends upon job type, physical demands of your job, pain levels, needs and desires to return to work. Your surgeon will support returns when you feel reasonable but may not exceed 3 months

TRAVEL:

- No formal travel restrictions following surgery but we do recommend you move and walk around during travel to avoid blood clots and stiffening
- You do not need a special card or note from your surgeon for the airport. Simply inform the TSA agent you have a knee replacement and they will screen you appropriately

DENTAL APPOINTMENTS:

- We recommend you avoid routine dental appointments for 12 weeks after surgery
- Antibiotics not needed unless you are immunocompromised or there is a dental infection

YOUR NEXT APPOINTMENT WILL BE IN 3 TO 5 MONTHS:

- We like to see you back sometime between 3 months and 6 months out from surgery
- If you are doing great and do not need this appointment you may cancel but should be seen at 1 year out from surgery