



Total Knee Replacement

What is a Knee Replacement?

During this surgery, your surgeon removes damaged bone and cartilage, and replaces it with an artificial joint (prosthesis) made of a combination of metal compounds and high-grade plastics.



Healthy

Moderate

Severe

Implant

What Can I Expect When I Have a Knee Replacement?

After your surgery is scheduled at OrthoNebraska Hospital, a Nurse Navigator will contact you to help plan your return home. Our goal is for you to heal at home following your Total Knee Replacement. Evidence suggests home is where you are most comfortable and have the lowest risk for infection.

Identify someone who can assist you and plan for that person to stay a minimum of one night. You will be required to have someone spend the night with you, if you go home the day of surgery. Typically, most people will need temporary help with transportation to and from therapy or follow up appointments, bathing, dressing, pet care, laundry, cleaning and meal preparation. Please discuss with your caregivers their availability and willingness to help, particularly with bathing and dressing prior to your surgery.

PLEASE BRING THESE THE DAY OF SURGERY

- Photo ID, insurance cards, including your prescription drug and discount cards, form of payment (credit/debit card) and workman's compensation information, if applicable.
- Copy of Advance Directives, if applicable.
- Prescription Medications: if you are spending the night, please bring the medications in the original bottles – the hospital will use your own home medications as a cost saving measure to you.
- Front wheeled or standard walker (if you have one).



Standard (No Wheel) Walker



Front Wheeled Walker



NO Four Wheeled Walker

How Should I Prepare for the Day of Surgery?

After you check in at the hospital on the day of surgery, you will speak with your surgeon and anesthesiologist before surgery. The anesthesia team will discuss the medications used to control pain and help you sleep during surgery. This may include a nerve block, spinal, or general anesthesia. Your surgery will take approximately 1-2 hours. Following surgery, you will be in the recovery room for another 1-2 hours before going upstairs to your private room. Note: Some same day surgeries may leave from the recovery room area.

Once you are settled in your room, your care team will work with you and your surgeon to monitor your progress toward independence with your discharge goals.

After you leave the hospital, you may have outpatient physical therapy depending on your needs and your surgeon's therapy plan. Your surgeon will encourage you to use your new joint and be an active participant in the healing process. While it may be challenging at times, following your surgeon's recommendations will speed your recovery and help your overall success.

What Should I Watch for After Surgery?



Signs of Infections

- Fever 101 degrees or higher
- Increased redness, swelling, drainage or heat around the incision site
- Increased pain not relieved by the pain medications prescribed by your surgeon



Signs of a Blood Clot

- Pain or tenderness in the calf of the surgical or nonsurgical leg
- Swelling or discoloration of the area



Signs a Blood Clot Has Traveled to Your Lungs

- Sudden onset of shortness of breath
- Sudden onset of chest pain

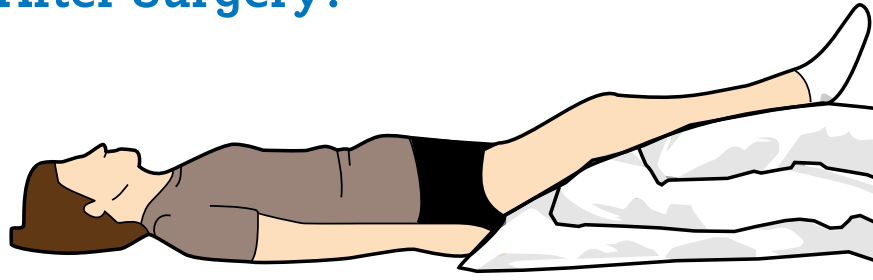
Notify your surgeon immediately if you have signs of a blood clot. Seek the nearest facility with an emergency room or call 911 if you have chest pain, shortness of breath or think a blood clot has traveled to your lungs.



What Should I Expect 1-2 Weeks After Surgery?

Wound Care

Follow your instructions given to you at the hospital for dressing changes and bathing. Monitor your incision for signs of infection. Swelling and bruising can occur all the way from your big toe to your hip on your surgical leg. This usually happens within the first 3-7 days and can take several weeks before the swelling and bruising starts to go down. Ice and elevating your leg above the level of your heart will help.



Pain

You will feel some pain or discomfort after surgery. Your surgeon and care team will be monitoring you closely and discussing options for pain management, including:

- **Change your activity.** If you are mobile and it hurts, you should rest. If immobilization has led to discomfort, get up and move around.
- **Ice the area.** Ice can help to bring down the swelling which lessens pain. We recommend using ice for 20-30 minutes to the affected area followed by 20-30 minutes of no ice.
- **Tylenol (acetaminophen).** This drug is believed to work on the same pain receptors as opioids, but without the side effects and addiction potential. We recommend you take the maximum safe amount of Tylenol around the clock for a minimum of 2-4 weeks or as needed to give you a baseline level of pain relief.
- **NSAIDS.** Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (Celebrex and Mobic) can decrease swelling around the surgical site, which may lessen the pain. Take it as prescribed.
- **Narcotic/opioid medication.** You will be given a prescription before leaving the hospital if narcotics are needed for pain. Typically, most patients require more in the first few days of recovery and then wean themselves down in the first week.

Activity

Before leaving the hospital, you will be given a plan for formal physical therapy, home exercises, or both. You will be taught how to use any assistive devices and how much weight you can put on your leg. Your leg may feel heavy and difficult to position. This is normal and gets better with time. It is common to have discomfort with activity and at night for several weeks.

Sleeping Positions

You may need to take certain precautions when positioning for sleep. You can use pillows between your legs for comfort. You may need multiple pillows for comfortable positioning.

Diet

By the time you leave the hospital, you should be eating your normal diet unless instructed otherwise. After surgery, you may notice low appetite, constipation or nausea. Small meals and snacks are helpful to keep your stomach settled and help your bowels. You may be prescribed medicine for nausea and constipation. Milk of Magnesia, stool softeners, and gentle laxatives like MiraLAX can also be used to manage constipation.

Sexual Activity

In most cases it takes six to twelve weeks for your incision, muscles, ligaments and bones to begin to heal. During this time, if you feel you are ready to resume sexual activity, it is important to speak with your surgeon and your partner. Your surgeon will discuss a timeline for when you can safely resume sexual activities.

Driving

You will be able to drive again when you are off any narcotic pain medications and as instructed by your surgeon.

Follow Up Appointments

You will see your surgeon or their physician assistant within 2-3 weeks following surgery. You will receive education at this appointment about continued recovery goals, and topics such as when you can return to work.



Thank You for Choosing OrthoNebraska!

This pamphlet is designed to give a brief overview of important information for your upcoming surgery. Your care team will provide you with additional individualized education throughout your joint replacement journey. We encourage you to visit our knee replacement education site, which includes demonstration videos about what to expect after your surgery.



OrthoNebraska.com/Knee

OrthoNebraska Clinic (24/7 and on call)
Nurse Navigation (weekdays 8am-4pm)
OrthoNebraska Physical Therapy

(402) 609-3000, #1
(402) 609-2278
(402) 609-1750

OrthoNebraska has several offices, some of which include orthopaedic urgent care locations. Visit **OrthoNebraska.com** or call **(402) 609-3000** for more information.

For more information about recovery from Total Joint Replacement, visit our website or call the Nurse Navigation Team.

OrthoNebraska Hospital meets the definition of a "physician-owned hospital" under 42 CFR 489.3. Nebraska Orthopaedic Hospital, LLC and OrthoWest, PC are each operating under the name OrthoNebraska. For more information, visit OrthoNebraska.com/legal.