



What to Expect: Total Joint Replacement Surgery

Your Care. Our Commitment.

Table of Contents

- Orthopaedic Surgery Patient Checklist1
- Orthopaedic Services at UPMC2**
- Preoperative Testing Requirements.2**
 - Preoperative Education..... 2
 - Shaping Up for Surgery: Preoperative Home Exercises for Total Joint Replacement 3
- Preparing for Surgery.5**
 - Day Before Surgery 5
 - What to Bring to the Hospital..... 5
 - Night Before Surgery..... 5
 - Day of Surgery..... 5
- Your Surgical Experience.....6**
- Recovering from Surgery.....7**
 - Postoperative Physical Therapy 7
- Preparing for Your Homecoming8**
 - Home Safety Preparation Tips 8



Orthopaedic Surgery Patient Checklist

The following list will help you get ready for your surgery. You may also have other things you want to add to this list.

- I have prepared my home (including removing safety hazards on the floor, making things easier to locate in my house, preparing extra meals for the freezer, etc.).
- I have the recommended items packed for the hospital (such as loose-fitting clothes for physical therapy).
- My pre-op testing has been completed.
- I started practicing my exercises.
- I made a list of my medicines to review with the nurse when she contacts me before my surgery (and I included any pain medicines or herbal medicines).
- I will take my medicine list to the hospital.
- If I have special equipment (such as a walker, cane, CPAP or BiPAP breathing machine), I put my name on it and will bring it with me.
- I have an antibacterial soap for my shower or bath before surgery.
- This person will drive me home and help me on the day I leave the hospital:

- This family member or friend will help me or stay with me the first week:

- I still have the following questions and will contact my doctor's office:

- These are other things I want to prepare before my surgery:

If you have any remaining questions, please call your doctor's office.

Orthopaedic Services at UPMC

Welcome to UPMC. Thank you for choosing our hospital to provide your health care services. We look forward to working with you during your total joint replacement surgery. Our culture represents our dedication to delivering the right care, at the right time, in the right way, every time. Patient care is our priority. Our care embraces these 4 core values to provide the best patient experience we can:

- Quality and Patient Safety
- Dignity and Respect
- Community Service
- Care and Compassion

The information included in this packet will provide you with details about your surgery and your pre- and postoperative course of rehabilitation (rehab). We will describe your care during your hospital stay and plans for when you leave the hospital. Every patient has different expectations and concerns about their joint replacement surgery. We hope that this informational packet will help you understand what to expect before and after surgery.

Preoperative Testing Requirements

You must have pre-admission testing before your surgery. Your doctor will determine what tests are necessary based upon your age, medical history, and physical exam. It is important that these tests are completed so that the results may be reviewed by your doctor.

The most common tests you will need before your surgery are:

- History and physical exam
- Blood work
- Chest x-ray
- EKG
- Urine sampling
- Additional consults as indicated by your surgeon

Preoperative testing must be completed within 45 days of surgery.

After your preoperative testing is complete, please discuss the following with your doctor:

- Ask which of your medicines you can take and which you should stop taking before your surgery.
- Identify any allergies to medicines or metals.
- If you are taking any blood thinners, such as Coumadin[®], aspirin, Plavix[®], or vitamin E, ask your doctor for specific instructions on when or if you should stop taking these.
- Stop taking herbal medicines 10 days before your surgery date.
- Have an updated list of your medicines, including dosage and how many and when you take them, and bring this with you the morning of your surgery.

UPMC offers outpatient testing to cover the range of services that you will need before your surgical procedure.

Preoperative Education

UPMC offers a full range of education programs to help you prepare for your surgery. The education is offered as a class at the hospital where you will have your surgery or as an online video. Please ask at your doctor's office for information on how to register. The education program can be found on UPMC.com/JointEducation.

Shaping Up for Surgery: Preoperative Home Exercises for Total Joint Replacement

One important step your surgeon wants you to take in preparing for total joint replacement surgery is beginning preoperative physical therapy exercises. There are several exercises that your surgeon would like you to do to prepare for surgery. **DO NOT** continue exercises if you are unable to complete them because of pain. These exercises are intended to build strength and endurance in major muscle groups in your legs. The stronger you are before surgery, the stronger you will be after surgery. If you do these exercises, you will improve your mobility (walking, and getting in and out of bed) and possibly assist in shortening your physical therapy course after surgery.

All exercises are to be done on your bed; do not get down on the floor to complete the exercises.

1. Ankle pumps

While sitting or lying down, “pump” your ankles up and down. Repeat 10 times, 3 times a day.



2. Quadriceps Sets (“Quad sets”)

While sitting or lying down, straighten the involved knee. Tighten your quadriceps (thigh) muscle by pushing the back of your knee into the bed. Repeat on opposite knee. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times, 3 times a day.



3. Gluteus Sets (“Glute Sets”)

While sitting or lying down, squeeze your buttock muscles together. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times, 3 times a day.



You might experience some soreness after completing the exercises. If you are unable to tolerate any of the exercises because of pain, stop the exercises.

4. Deep Breathing

Practicing deep breathing can help prevent complications after surgery. Take a slow, deep breath through your nose. Breathe in for 3 seconds. Feel your abdomen (belly) expand as you inhale. Hold your breath for 3 seconds. Pucker your lips, and exhale through your mouth. Breathe out slowly and evenly for 6 seconds. Feel your abdomen (belly) move inward.

Stop Smoking

There are several reasons that stopping smoking is a good idea before you come to the hospital.

- Nicotine interferes with the healing process.
- Those who smoke tend to heal more slowly than those who do not.
- UPMC is a smoke-free environment. You will not be able to smoke while you are at the hospital.

Stopping smoking and total joint replacement surgery are stressful life events, and doing both at the same time can be difficult. If you stop smoking before your hospital stay, you can focus all your attention on your recovery following surgery.

Preparing for Surgery

Day Before Surgery

You can expect a call from the pre-admission nurse the day before your surgery (Monday surgeries will get a call on Friday) to review your medical history and list of medicines.

Keep paper and pen near your phone to write down any important information. Please have the following information available:

- Medicines — including over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, supplements, and herbal preparations
- Allergies — including medicines, food, or latex and the reaction that each cause

The nurse may tell you to take some medicines the morning of surgery.

The nurse will tell you what time to report to the hospital and also provide you with directions to the hospital.

What to Bring to the Hospital

- Pack loose-fitting clothes, such as shorts or sweat pants.
- Pack shoes with non-skid bottoms or non-skid slippers.
- Pack a short length robe.
- Plan to wear personal clothing to therapy sessions — bring 1 to 2 days of clothes.
- Pack personal toiletries.
- Pack glasses and hearing aids.
- Label canes or walkers with your name if brought from home.

Night Before Surgery

Enjoy a healthy evening snack before bedtime, and follow the directions given to you by the pre-admission nurse as to when you should stop drinking and eating before surgery.

We ask that you do not smoke, use smokeless tobacco, or drink alcoholic beverages 24 hours prior to surgery. If you do not follow these instructions, your surgery could be cancelled.

All jewelry and piercings will need to be removed, so take them off the night before and leave them at home.

It is very important to follow an antimicrobial cleansing preparation to reduce the risk of infection. Bathe or shower with antibacterial soap as recommended by your doctor. Do not shave the area where you are having surgery.

Day of Surgery

Do not take any medicines on the day of your surgery unless a medical staff member has told you to do so. If you are taking any daily medicines for blood pressure, diabetes, or any other medical condition, follow the instructions as given to you by the pre-admission nurse.

You should wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothing, preferably 2 piece outfits (top and bottom), and low-heeled shoes, such as tennis shoes.

Do not wear contact lenses. Bring your glasses and a case.

Remove nail polish. You may be asked to remove artificial nails. Do not use hair spray or hair gel 24 hours before surgery. Do not use any lotions, perfumes, or deodorant the day of surgery.

If you use a CPAP machine at home, bring this with you to the hospital.

Leave dentures with family members prior to surgery for safe keeping.

You will need to leave such things as rings, watches, jewelry, credit cards, and money at home. Do not bring these items to the hospital with you; the hospital is not responsible for these items if they are lost.

Bring puzzle books, a book to read, or something else you enjoy doing to help you pass the time.

It is very important to follow an antimicrobial cleansing preparation to reduce the risk of infection. Bathe or shower with antibacterial soap as recommended by your doctor. Do not shave the area where you are having surgery.

Your Surgical Experience

When you arrive at the Patient and Family Lounge, you will sign in at the reception desk. Your nurse will welcome you and take you into the preparation area. A family member may wait with you here. An IV will be started to give you fluids. You will be given an IV antibiotic before surgery to prevent infections. The nurse will review your medical history with you. Your anesthesiologist will also meet with you to discuss anesthesia options. Your doctor will see you and verify your surgical site and answer any questions you might have. Once you are taken to surgery, we ask that your family member returns to the Patient and Family Lounge. Once your surgery is done, you will be taken to the recovery room. In the recovery room, you will be watched closely. You will stay in the recovery room until you are awake and comfortable. The surgeon will talk to your family once your surgery is completed. Your family will be able to visit with you once you are taken to your hospital room and the nurses have you settled in.

There will be several types of equipment used during your recovery period. You will be asked to breathe into an incentive spirometer, which helps to expand and exercise your lungs and can help reduce respiratory complications. A drain may be used to drain blood and fluid from the surgical area. It is generally removed a day after surgery. You may have a Foley catheter in place after surgery to drain your bladder and monitor fluid balance.

Some doctors may use a Continuous Passive Motion (CPM) machine. The CPM does not replace active physical therapy. After your surgery, you will be started on a regular diet unless you are experiencing nausea.

The Orthopaedic Nursing Unit

When you are discharged from the Post Anesthesia Care Unit, you will be transferred to a nursing unit. On the nursing unit, you will recover from your surgical procedure and learn the skills needed to successfully return home and resume your normal routine.

Pain Control

Controlling your pain is a team effort. It is important that you let your doctor and nurse know if you have pain and ask for your pain medicines. The nurses will frequently ask you about your pain. They will have you use a pain scale (0-10) to help you identify the level of pain you are feeling. The nurse will also work closely with the physical therapist to ensure effective pain control for therapy sessions. This will help your therapy sessions to be more effective and improve your range of motion. Together, you, your nurse, and your doctor will work to keep you comfortable.

Blood Clot Prevention

After your surgery, you will have sleeves placed on your legs that are attached to a machine that automatically fills them with air and then releases it. This produces a mild squeezing sensation to your legs that prevents the blood from collecting in your legs and forming a blood clot. Exercising your legs with ankle pumps also helps to get blood flowing and prevent clots. In addition, your doctor may order a medicine that will thin your blood and help prevent blood clots. This medicine will either come as a tablet or an injection. You will receive information about the medicine you receive.

Preventing Falls

We are committed to your health and well-being. Our surgical patients sometimes fall because strength, balance, and coordination may be affected after surgery. Always ask for assistance when getting up.

Your Discharge: When You're Ready to Leave the Hospital

After your doctor writes the order for you to go home, your nurse will prepare your instructions (called discharge instructions) and review them with you and your family. It is important for your recovery that you understand how to care for yourself after you leave the hospital, so please feel free to ask questions.

What to Expect After You Leave the Hospital

Swelling and bruising can occur for weeks after your surgery. You may have swelling and bruising around the knee or hip and down into your lower leg. Bruising may last up to 6 to 8 weeks; this is part of the normal healing process. Being on a blood thinner can contribute to bruising as well. However, blood thinner medicine is very important, so please continue to use it as you are directed. Swelling of the leg and down into the foot can sometimes last for 2 to 3 months.

You can help to minimize the swelling and bruising by elevating your leg when you are not doing your exercises or when you are resting. Apply ice for 20 minutes at a time while you elevate your leg and also after exercising. Do not sit for prolonged periods with your legs down.

Call your surgeon if you have increased redness, swelling, or drainage from your incision and/or a fever of 101 F or greater.

If you still have concerns about your swelling or bruising, please call your surgeon's office before getting care from your primary care doctor or Emergency Department.

Recovering From Surgery

Postoperative Physical Therapy

Therapy is an important part of the healing process. Your active participation is key to a smooth and successful recovery. You will regain maximum strength and movement of your new joint — and return to your normal daily activities much more quickly — if you work hard during your therapy sessions. Plan on participating in therapy each day that you are in the hospital. You may start therapy the same day as your surgery. Your physical therapist will teach you the basics of getting in and out of bed, walking with an assistive device (such as a wheeled walker, crutches, or a cane), and how to complete the exercises your doctor wants you to do after surgery. If you need to climb steps at home, you will practice this as well. Therapists will teach you how to protect your new joint and teach you any movement precautions/restrictions your doctor may have prescribed. After surgery, some patients have difficulty completing basic activities of daily living, such as dressing, bathing, or getting in and out of the shower. Occupational therapists can help you learn to perform these activities safely.

Therapy does not end when you leave the hospital. Continue to do your exercises each day until your follow-up appointment with your doctor. At that time, your doctor will give you further instructions on what he or she wants you to do to further gain strength and movement in your new joint.

Preparing for Your Homecoming

Before coming to the hospital, there are some things you can do to prepare yourself and your home to make your recovery smooth and more comfortable. Preparing your home before your surgery will help to minimize your stress when returning home after your hospital stay.

Identify a Caregiver or Support Person

- Identify who will stay with you or help you for approximately the first week after you return home from the hospital. While you likely will not need help getting in and out of bed or walking, you will need help with household tasks, such as preparing meals or doing laundry. Your surgeon should be able to tell you approximately how long you will be in the hospital so you and your friend/family can anticipate when you will return home and arrange their schedule around this.
- Identify a friend/family member who will drive you home on the day you leave the hospital — you will not be allowed to drive yourself. Your doctor should be able to tell you approximately how long you will be in the hospital so you and the person driving you home will be able to make arrangements.
- Decide where you are going to spend the majority of your day while you recover. This will be your “recovery station.” Place commonly used items (tissues, phone, remote controls, reading materials/glasses, medicines, waste basket, etc.) within easy reach.
- Consider preparing food and freezing it as individual meals that can be easily re-heated.

Home Safety Preparation Tips

After total joint replacement surgery, it is extremely important to take every precaution to avoid falls and other accidents that could make your recovery longer or create additional problems. Below, you will see some tips to help make your living environment safe. Prior to your surgery, take a walk through your home and make sure that each room is safe and easy to navigate through. Use this list to make any necessary adjustments before your hospital stay.

Walkways and Stairs

- Clear clutter from hallways and stairs.
- Remove throw rugs and floor mats.
- Pick up or move tripping hazards, such as extension cords and lamp cords.
- If you have pets that may trip you or bump you off balance, consider having them stay with someone else or in another part of the home during your recovery.

Lighting

- Make sure rooms, hallways, and stairs are well lit.
- Use night-lights in hallways, bedrooms, and bathrooms.

Kitchen

- Rearrange regularly used items so they are between waist and shoulder height (at arm level) so you can easily reach them without stretching or stooping.

Bathroom

- Place a non-skid surface on the floor of your bathtub or shower.
- Consider installing a handheld showerhead or getting a long-handled sponge.
- Consider installing removable tub clamps, available for use as temporary grab bars.
- Consider getting a raised toilet seat and shower bench.
- Place toiletries at a height where you can reach them easily.

Bedroom

- Place a lamp within easy reach of your bed.
- Place shoes, clothing, tissues, etc., at a height where you can reach them easily.

We look forward to caring for you during and after your joint replacement. This booklet is offered to give you general information about your surgery and recovery. Please ask your surgeon if you have any other questions. For additional health information, please visit the Health Library at UPMC.com, located in the For Patients, Families & Visitors section of the website.

Smoke-Free Environment

To protect our patients, visitors, and staff from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke, smoking is not permitted anywhere on UPMC property. All UPMC hospitals, facilities, and grounds, including parking lots, garages, and other outdoor locations such as UPMC-owned sidewalks, are smoke-free. UPMC has no designated smoking areas. If you choose to smoke, you cannot do so on the UPMC campus. A patient who smokes does so against our advice and assumes the risk for any problems as a result of smoking. For information about smoking and how to quit, access the patient education materials on UPMC's website at upmc.com/HealthLibrary. If you're interested in "Becoming a Quitter" Call **1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)** or visit pa.quitlogix.org.



For more information, visit us at
UPMC.com/JointEducation.

UPMC policy prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, sex, genetics, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, familial status, disability, veteran status, or any other legally protected group status. Further, UPMC will continue to support and promote equal employment opportunity, human dignity, and racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity. This policy applies to admissions, employment, and access to and treatment in UPMC programs and activities. This commitment is made by UPMC in accordance with federal, state, and/or local laws and regulations.