

## Frequently Asked Questions Total Knee Replacement

**When do I see the doctor after surgery?**

*Between 2-3 weeks after surgery for evaluation of your wound and recovery progression. Staples will be removed at this visit. Call (708) 236-2599 for an appointment.*

**When can I shower?**

*48 hours after surgery, if there is no wound drainage you may shower. After showering thoroughly, dry the wound area. Avoid soaking the incision in water or bathing/swimming for 5-6 weeks from the date of surgery. Make sure the area about the staples remains clean and dry.*

**When can I drive?**

*When you are no longer taking pain medicine you may resume driving. Typically patients feel comfortable driving a car between 3 and 6 weeks after surgery.*

**When do I start physical therapy?**

*Upon discharge from the hospital, physical therapy will be arranged in your home for 1-2 weeks, only if you are unable to start outpatient therapy immediately. You will receive your outpatient physical therapy prescription before surgery and may start as soon as you feel comfortable, but no later than 2 weeks after surgery. You can attend outpatient therapy sessions at any location close to home. You can pre-arrange for this by calling a therapy facility prior to surgery.*

**What exercises should I do at home?**

*You will be given a handout on exercises to do on your own at home. The harder you work on the range of motion of your knee the more you will regain. We suggest performing the exercises on the sheet at least twice a day in addition to your work with the physical therapists. It is important to work full extension of your knee (getting it completely straight) in the first few weeks as well.*

**When can I stop wearing the stockings?**

*You may remove the stockings daily for hygiene purposes as well as at night while you are sleeping. To help with lower extremity swelling you should wear the stockings for 3 weeks.*

**What blood thinner will I be on and for how long after surgery?**

*Depending on your medical health you will be on an injectable anticoagulant while in the hospital and then on oral aspirin (325mg twice a day) upon discharge; or, coumadin (with biweekly blood draws to check levels). The duration of anticoagulation will be 3 weeks with either regimen.*

**Do I need to clean the incision?**

*You may clean over your incision, but avoid placing any creams or topical agents over the wound for the first 3 weeks after surgery. If there is any wound drainage, place a dry dressing over it and notify the office (312) 432-2466.*

**Are there restrictions as to the position I sleep at night?**

*You may sleep in any position you like. Avoid sleeping with a pillow under your knee or with your knee flexed. Patients often find it helpful to place a pillow between their knees when sleeping on the side.*