



Prepping for Joint Surgery



by Jenna Pon, RN, BSN

Preparing for joint replacement surgery at an outpatient surgery center allows you to return home sooner than if you had the surgery performed in a hospital. To ensure your quickest recovery at home, you'll need to plan ahead. Follow these simple steps for a smooth transition and best results.

+ READY YOUR HOME

Make your home “recovery-friendly” — think safety first, and then comfort. Remove throw or area rugs that may cause you to slip or that could get caught on the tip of a cane, a crutch or a walker. Also, phone and electric cords should be securely fastened around the outside walls of the room. A home visit from a physical therapist and/or an occupational therapist before your surgery can be arranged if requested by your surgeon to help you through this process. The therapist can perform a home evaluation as well.

+ GETTING COMFORTABLE

Next, set up a recovery area in your home. Choose a space where you will spend most of your time during the day — a favorite easy chair, or perhaps the sofa. If necessary, move an end table or a TV tray table next to the chair or sofa. Gather items that you might like to have within reach: a phone, TV/DVD/stereo remote controls, a box of tissues, a wastebasket and reading material. When you begin home recovery, add such things as reading glasses and/or a contact lens case, medications, instructions from the doctor and an address book or a list of often-called phone numbers. Set up other recovery centers in the bedroom, kitchen, bathroom and any other room where you spend time.

+ PREOPERATIVE INFORMATION

Before knee replacement surgery, your doctor may order tests to make sure you are healthy enough for the operation. This may involve blood tests, X-rays or an EKG (an electrical graph of your heart's function). You will NOT have to donate blood before the operation. Once you receive clearance for your general health, you can move forward with surgery.

There are several things to remember the night before your surgery:

- It's most important to remember to fast the night before your surgery —

nothing to eat or drink, including gum, mints or water, and nothing by mouth after 9 p.m. the night before your surgery. If you take certain medications on a daily basis, discuss this with your patient care coordinator at the time of the preoperative call.

- Shower with preferably antimicrobial (hibiclens) or antibacterial soap either the night before or the day of surgery.
- Do NOT apply any lotions, perfumes or deodorants to the operative limb.
- Do NOT shave the operative limb with a razor. Clippers will be used upon admission if hair removal is necessary.
- If you are going home the same day of your surgery, you must have a





responsible person stay with you for at least 24 hours after surgery.

- Wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothes the day of your surgery.
- Non-skid, closed-toe, slip-on shoes are recommended for after surgery.
- You are welcome to bring toiletries from home to freshen up after your surgery.

+ ARRIVAL AT THE SURGERY CENTER

Arrival time the day of your surgery is usually an hour and a half prior to the start of your surgery. This allows the surgery center team time to complete the necessary admission paperwork. This time also includes your admission to the pre-operative area. Upon arrival at the surgery center, you will be greeted by our front-desk receptionist and asked to read and sign several forms, including your Patient

Rights and Responsibilities, a Patient Agreement on Admission and a Privacy Notice. The receptionist will be more than happy to answer any questions you may have regarding these forms. Additionally, at this time, the receptionist will make copies of your insurance card for billing purposes. Once this is completed, you will meet the preoperative nurse, who will escort you to the preoperative area to meet with your anesthesiologist and operating-room RN. You will also have time to talk to your surgeon before surgery.

+ ASK QUESTIONS

Having surgery can be overwhelming and scary. There is a lot of information given to you before and after your surgery, the terminology used can be confusing, and you might not remember all of it. If, at any time before or after your surgery, you have questions, call the surgery center.

A registered nurse will be available to answer your questions and help put any concerns to ease.

+ OUTPATIENT JOINT REPLACEMENT: IT'S THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE

Proper pre- and postoperative planning and education results in positive outcomes and high patient satisfaction. You can expect a faster recovery, less chance of an infection, one-on-one nursing care and close contact with a registered nurse at the surgery center before and after your surgery to answer any questions.

The key to a positive outcome after your joint replacement is education and understanding. Knowing what to expect before and after your surgery prevents surprises, decreases stress and anxiety and increases your overall success and satisfaction.