

TOTAL JOINT SURGERY

Preparing mentally for surgery is important for you and for your family or support person. It is a key part of any successful major surgery, and especially so with total joint replacement. The pain and activity limitations after surgery will be different than what you have been experiencing and will be short term. A significant portion of the recovery process is using your new joint by walking and doing the exercises as outlined in your doctor orders. Depending on your condition, your recovery and exercise plan will be personalized to meet your needs.

Your stay in the hospital will be short and your recovery will be continued after discharge to your home, with your family, or at an extended care or rehab facility. It is important for you to mentally commit to follow your doctor's instructions and work on your exercise plan following surgery to benefit most from the joint replacement. If you or your family need support, either physically or emotionally, coping with surgery and recovery, please talk with a member of our staff or with your physician.

Prepare Your Home For Your Return

Taking steps to prepare your home environment will make things much easier for your discharge from the hospital. Here are a few suggestions:

- Make arrangements to have help. Ideally, someone should stay with you, especially at night, for the first two weeks.
- You won't be driving until your doctor gives you the "Okay." Find someone to provide groceries, errands, and drive you to your follow-up appointments.
- Rearrange your most frequently used items so they are within easy reach. Store food, toiletries, and other supplies between your waist and shoulder.
- If your bedroom is on the second floor be prepared. Your doctor may allow only one trip up the stairs each day during your initial recovery. Sometimes, stairs are simply "out" until your recovery reaches a certain point. Find a room or area on the first floor that you can call your own for a couple of weeks. Stock it with needed supplies so that you can rest during the day.
- Place a phone and other electronic devices within easy reach.
- Make sure you have good lighting and the light switch is within easy reach.
- THINK SAFETY – Remove any obstacles that may cause you to trip or fall, i.e. throw rugs, electrical cords, foot stools or other small objects that may be a hazard. Don't forget small pets that may have a tendency to get "under foot" as well.
- You may want a cushion to raise the seat in a low chair.
- Install and use the railings along any stairs.

Plan Ahead With Your Family

Your family and friends are very important in helping you during your recovery. Here's a list of things to suggest when they ask what they can do to help.

- Assist in stocking up on canned and frozen or packaged foods.
- Help move food to cabinets between your waist and shoulder level, helping you avoid reaching and bending.
- Prepare a room with all the needed supplies so that you can rest during the day.
- Remove rugs and other clutter for safe walking.
- Run errands, grocery shop, and drive you to follow up doctor's appointments.
- Assist with your family's or pet's needs.
- Arrange for needed equipment throughout your recovery.