

Knee Surgeries

Total Knee Replacement Surgery

In total knee replacement surgery the surgeon reshapes the damaged bones to fit the shape of the metal prosthesis. The thigh bone (femur) and the shin bone (tibia) are covered with two metal shells separated by a liner. The knee cap (patella) may also be replaced if there is arthritis under the surface of the bone. The majority of people who have their knees replaced enjoy improved mobility and decreased pain for up to 15 to 20 years.

After knee surgery you can expect to remain in hospital for 2 to 3 nights. The nurse will check on you to monitor your progress and help you manage your pain. During your hospital stay you will see both a physiotherapist and an occupational therapist. The physiotherapist will work on your overall mobility and the occupational therapist will teach you safe ways to do everyday activities.

On the days following surgery, you will practice standing, walking, and climbing stairs using walking aids. Expect to use a walking aid, like crutches or a walker, for at least the first 3 months after surgery. Exercising regularly can help you get the most out of your surgery. Physical activity speeds recovery, stimulates your circulation, and reduces your chance of developing a blood clot.

You will be on medication to manage the pain. It is important to talk to your nurse about pain control. Don't try to suffer through; pain can stop you from moving your joint and delay your recovery.

After your discharge from the hospital you will be expected to continue your physiotherapy. You will have to be cautious with your new joint and avoid certain activities for at least the first three months. For example, you will not be allowed to squat, kneel, or bend down to the ground. After four to six weeks you should be able to walk confidently and should have regained much of your muscle strength.

For more information about knee replacement surgery or to find out if this is the best surgery for you, talk to your doctor.

Uni-Knee Replacement Surgery

You may be a candidate for uni-knee (unicondylar-knee) replacement if the cartilage is significantly damaged on only one side of your knee. This is commonly seen in people who are either bowlegged or knock-kneed.

A uni-knee replacement is surgery to only one side of your knee. The damaged part of the joint is removed and replaced with an implant. Often people who are eligible for this surgery have a shorter recovery time than they would have had with a total knee replacement.

Talk to your surgeon to find out if this procedure is appropriate for you.

Arthroscopic Surgery

With arthroscopic surgery broken bits of cartilage are removed from the joint. Surgeons “scrape away” the broken cartilage, allowing the joint to move smoothly with less pain.

Arthroscopic surgery is sometimes used by surgeons to look inside the joint to determine the extent of the damage. While this procedure is less invasive than a full joint replacement, people who have arthroscopic surgery will still have to undergo physiotherapy.

Talk to your surgeon to find out if this procedure is appropriate for you.

