



Total Knee Replacement – Recovery

Enhanced recovery after surgery program
(RAAC)

TO BETTER GUIDE YOU

You are the most important person involved in both your surgery and your recovery.

It's normal for the first few days after your surgery to feel more difficult than when you first leave the hospital.

General advice

It's important to change positions every hour during the first few days to prevent stiffness in the operated leg. Walking regularly with a walker can also help. You need to find the right balance between rest (for recovery) and movement (to avoid stiffness). Unless your orthopedic surgeon says otherwise, you can put as much weight on the operated leg as you can tolerate.

Restrictions

According to your orthopedic surgeon's recommendations:

☐ **No movement restrictions** for the knee.

- You can move your leg in all directions and put as much weight on it as you can tolerate;
- You can use a belt or strap (that you hold) to help increase your range of motion;
- Listen to your body and stop moving as soon as you feel too uncomfortable.

After a few weeks, you can kneel, half-kneel, and be on all fours, depending on your tolerance. Wearing a kneepad is recommended to avoid discomfort.

Swelling

It is important to do the circulation exercises on this sheet every hour for the first few days.

If your leg tends to swell, lie down for about 15 minutes, three times a day. Elevate the leg higher than your heart.



Pain relief

Pain is normal after surgery

- As needed, continue taking the pain killers prescribed by your doctor or nurse;
- Plan to take your medication 30 minutes before doing the exercises to better control the pain;
- You can ice the painful area for 15 minutes, as needed or after the exercises. Wait at least one hour between applications to prevent ice burns.

Walking

It is important to walk as naturally as possible on the operated leg.

Bend the knee, place the heel on the ground first, then the toes. When the foot is on the ground, the knee should be straight. Alternate steps, keep your walker nearby, keep your back straight, and look straight ahead.

Walker

A walker is recommended for the first few weeks until you are stronger and the pain has subsided.

Adjustment

- In a standing position, keep your back straight and arms extended.
- Adjust the walker height so that the handles are level with the creases of your wrists:
 - Lean on the walker with your hands as much as you need to take pressure off the operated leg;
 - If the walker was loaned to you, return it according to the instructions provided.

Stairs

If you have two handrails close enough together, use both. If not, use the available handrail and a cane. Stay close to the handrail for better support.

Going up

- Step up first with the foot of your good leg, then bring the other foot up. Always keep the cane on the same step as the foot of your operated leg;
- Do not alternate. Place both feet on the same step, one step at a time.

Going down

- Place the cane, then the foot of your operated leg on the step below. Follow with your non-operated leg;
- Do not alternate.

Physiotherapy follow-up

If physiotherapy is recommended by your orthopedic surgeon, the appointments will take place at the outpatient clinic or a private clinic in your area.

Exercises

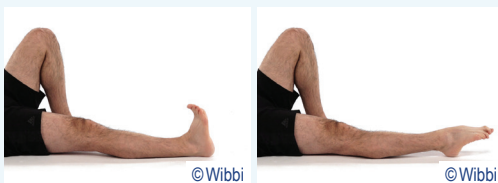
Here is the list of exercises for the first few days after surgery.

Do them two to three times a day, as tolerated. Do them slowly for proper technique.

Get well soon!

Circulation exercises

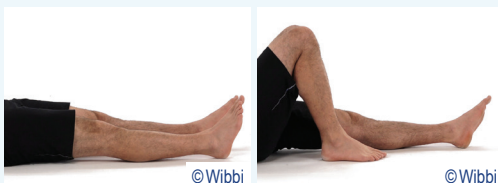
REPETITIONS: **30** FREQUENCY: **every hour**



- Flex your toes toward you, then point them down as far as possible;
- Repeat.

Active knee flexion

REPETITIONS: **10** HOLD: **5** seconds



- Lie on your back with your legs extended;
- Bend one knee as much as possible without using your hands;
- Hold for 5 seconds;
- Straighten your leg and repeat.

Assisted knee flexion

REPETITIONS: **10** HOLD: **5** seconds



- Lying on your back, place a towel around your ankle, and hold both ends with your hands;
- Bend your knee as much as possible, then gently pull on the towel to bend it more;
- Hold for 5 seconds and release.

Knee flexion/extension

REPETITIONS: **10** HOLD: **5** seconds



TIP

- Place a towel on the floor if needed to make the movement easier.
- Sit on the edge of a bed or a chair with your knees bent and thighs supported;
- Bend the operated knee as far back as possible. Try to bring your heel toward your buttocks without lifting your buttocks off the chair;
- Hold the contraction for 5 seconds, then repeat.

Isometric quadriceps

REPETITIONS: **10** HOLD: **5** seconds



- Sit with your leg extended;
- Contract your quadriceps (front of the thigh), pressing the knee down;
- Hold for 5 seconds. Relax and don't hold your breath.

Knee extension

REPETITIONS: **10** HOLD: **5** seconds



- Place a rolled towel under your knee;
- Raise your foot as high as possible by extending your knee fully, without lifting it off the roll;
- Hold for 5 seconds, then slowly lower the leg.