



Total Joint Replacement Guide

Helping you on your path to recovery



STARTING YOUR JOURNEY

Powers Medical Center has developed a comprehensive orthopedics program to ensure a successful recovery. **Your** team includes physicians, nurses, pharmacists, physical and occupational therapists, and patient care coordinators. The purpose of this guide is to help **YOU** feel confident and prepared for your upcoming surgery.

Starting your journey

- Getting ready for surgery
- Arrival at hospital and day of surgery protocol
- Hospital stay expectations
- Post-op expectations

BEING PREPARED FOR SURGERY

THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON IN THIS PROCESS IS YOU!

We want you to understand what is going to happen every step of the way. Joint replacement is not a simple procedure and there will be challenging times. However, it is also very rewarding and will allow you to have a more active lifestyle. Our team at Prowers Medical Center is dedicated to helping you achieve your goals. We're here to help you through every step of this process.

Thousands of Joint Replacements are performed every year. Joint replacement is an effective way to relieve the pain and restore movement in the damaged joint. We're here to teach you and help you, but **you** are the one who has to put in the time and effort to have a pain free, functional joint. This will enable you to get back to doing things that maybe you haven't done in years!

BEING PREPARED FOR SURGERY

PRE-OP TESTING

- Your surgeon will have you complete and pass multiple tests to ensure you are a candidate for surgery
- You will need to complete paperwork and lab work at the hospital
- It is recommended that you pick up your prescription pain medication prior to surgery



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- Pre-operation (Pre-op) therapy and increased activity will greatly benefit you in all aspects of your recovery
- Discuss with your Doctor and Therapist what you need to be doing, and how often you should be doing it.



BEING PREPARED FOR SURGERY

DO'S

- Be prepared to be limited in mobility for a few weeks
- Clean up clutter in your house for safe mobility
- Pick up throw rugs that may pose a fall risk
- Make difficult to reach household items more accessible
- Plan easy meals in advance

YOU WILL NEED:

- Someone to bring you home from the hospital.
- Front wheeled walker and an elevated toilet seat for lower extremity surgery.
- Someone to be with you intermittently at home to assist you with daily activities such as bathing, cooking, cleaning, home exercise program, etc.
- A firm chair with armrests and good height available

BEING PREPARED FOR SURGERY

- A nurse will contact you the day before surgery with instructions regarding the day of your surgery. **Please follow his/her instructions.**
- **Do not eat or drink after midnight the day before your surgery.** You may drink as much water as you need to take your medications as instructed by your health care provider.
- Shower before coming to the hospital, washing the surgical joint with Hibiclens as instructed by your nurse.
- Please remove any make up, nail polish, and don't apply lotion to affected area.



DAY OF SURGERY

- **You will need to bring:**
 - Insurance cards and ID
 - Glasses with a case
 - Current medication list
 - Loose fitting clothing
 - Toiletries
 - CPAP (if needed)
 - Supportive shoes
 - An assistive device (walker) if you have one
- **DO NOT bring:**
 - Jewelry
 - Money
 - Lotions
 - Other items of value

DAY OF SURGERY

- Upon arrival to Prowers Medical Center, you will enter through the main entrance and register at the Admissions Office.
- You will be escorted to your hospital room, where you can leave your belongings.
- You will stay in your hospital room until surgery staff is ready for you. You can rest or watch TV until it is time for your surgery.
- You will see your Doctor and Anesthesiologist so they can answer any last minute questions.
- The surgeon will mark your skin on the area to be operated.
- An IV will be started, and you will be taken into the surgical suite.
- From registration until you are taken into the surgical suite, your name, birth date and procedure **will** be asked frequently.
- Your surgery will be performed by skilled professionals (*The surgery will likely take approximately 2-3 hours*)

RECOVERY

WAKING UP FROM SURGERY

- Following surgery you will go to the Recovery Room (PACU – Post Anesthesia Care Unit).
- Pain and nausea medications will be available if needed.
- You may feel:
 - Sleepy and confused
 - Opening your eyes will be hard and your eyesight may be blurred
 - Dry mouth
 - Soreness around the incision site
 - Sore throat
- This is where your family may come in to see you.
- Once stable, you will be taken back to your designated hospital room.

HOSPITAL STAY

THE GOALS OF YOUR HOSPITAL STAY ARE:

- Pain control
- Maintain stable vitals which nursing staff will monitor frequently
- Increase mobility through Physical and Occupational Therapy
- Normalize eating habits
- Ensure that you are safe and ready to return home with assistance



REHABILITATION IN THE HOSPITAL

The morning after your surgery, you will be evaluated by a Physical Therapist and possibly an Occupational Therapist.

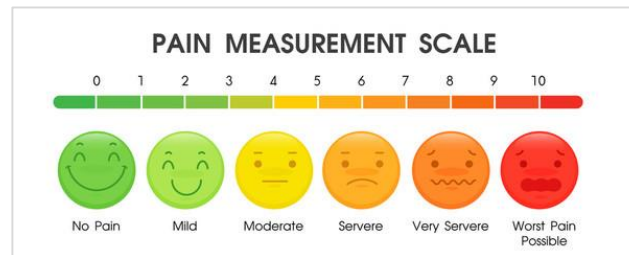
- The goal of this session is to assess your mobility.
- This therapy session will likely include standing, walking with an assistive device (such as a walker), assessing your balance and safety, and ensure you are able to perform all necessary activities for you to return home.
- Physical activity at this point is very advantageous in normalizing your range of motion, strength, improving circulation, and decreasing the risk of blood clots.
- Movement will help work off the effects of anesthesia, stimulate blood circulation and keep your muscles strong.



FACILITATE YOUR RECOVERY

PAIN MANAGEMENT

- We are dedicated to helping you manage your pain.
- You will have pain at this point. You will need to take your pain medication as prescribed to allow your pain to be under control and allow you to participate in therapy. The purpose of pain medication is not to eliminate pain completely. Pain medication is to help you manage your pain. The pain you feel after surgery will be different from what you felt before surgery. **IF your pain is not controlled, notify your nurse.**
- Side effects of pain medication may include: sleepiness, nausea, difficulty with urination, itchiness and constipation.
- Prowers Medical Center uses a pain scale to rate your pain from zero (no pain) to ten (excruciating, in tears pain).



FACILITATE YOUR RECOVERY

SAFETY

- Please use the call button so a nurse can help you get out of bed. Your affected extremity will not function as normal initially. You will need assistance to be safe.

COMPLIANCE

- It is imperative for your recovery that you perform the exercises given to you, even if they cause some pain. **The first two weeks after surgery decide how successful of an outcome you will have.**
- In the case of a knee replacement, **THE SOONER YOU GET YOUR KNEE STRAIGHT, THE BETTER!!**

DIET

- Your first meal after surgery may be clear liquids (broth, juice, gelatin, coffee, tea, popsicles).
- Your diet will be advanced as tolerated.
- For medical problems such as diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, kidney disease, or other conditions, your physician may add restrictions to your diet in the hospital.



DISCHARGE FROM HOSPITAL

YOU WILL BE DISCHARGED ONCE YOU:

- Have your pain under control
- Are safely able to get in and out of bed, use the restroom, get in and out of a vehicle safely, and go up and down stairs if necessary
- Feel comfortable managing your medications, including blood thinners to decrease the risk of blood clots. We use different methods to prevent blood clots as these interventions are very important. **Remember the best way to prevent a clot, is to walk and be physically active.**
- Have been able to eat and drink without nausea or vomiting
- Have been cleared by your health care provider and have a return appointment for a follow-up visit, as well as, referrals for Home Health Therapy or Outpatient Therapy services.

THERAPY AFTER DISCHARGE

THERAPY OPTIONS BASED ON YOUR MOBILITY AND ASSISTANCE NEEDED

Home Health Therapy Indicated if:

- You are struggling with performing the basics safely, such as walking with a walker, transfers, bathing and toileting.
- You don't have reliable transportation to get you to outpatient therapy. Remember you will be taking pain medication initially which will affect your ability to drive.
- You need assistance with your medications.
- You would have difficulty tolerating a full hour of outpatient therapy.



Outpatient Therapy Indicated if:

- You are safe at home and ready for gait, transfers, and balance progression.
- You have reliable transportation available to get to outpatient therapy.
- You are independent with managing medications or have reliable help for medication set up.
- You can tolerate a full hour session of outpatient therapy.



DETAILED GOALS OF THERAPY

Range of Motion (ROM)

- Obtaining full range of motion in your new joint is vital! This may be painful and uncomfortable at times, but it's absolutely necessary! **Without normal range of motion, your new joint will not move correctly.**
- Precautions may be put in place depending on the type of surgical intervention provided by your surgeon. Your therapy team will ensure that your range of motion is progressed within the precautions established by your surgeon.
- Range of Motion work will help to decrease pain and diminish the likelihood of scar tissue formation.

ROM Specific to the Knee

- The primary goal specific to your knee is to get your knee straight as soon as possible (approximately one month). You need it straight to be able to walk without a limp.
- Avoid the use of pillows being placed directly under your knee as this will decrease your ability to get your knee straight.
- The bending of your knee will be a more gradual process.

DETAILED GOALS OF THERAPY

Mobility

- As your range of motion normalizes, strength, repetitive functional movement patterns, gait and balance (lower extremity surgeries) will become more emphasized.
- Your home exercise program (HEP) will be updated to match your physical capabilities. We want it to be challenging, but manageable.
- Your therapist is responsible for progressing you in ways that may be uncomfortable, but are necessary for successful outcomes.

Mobility Specific to Lower Extremity

- Correct gait pattern with heel contact initially and toe off at the end help you walk more natural.
- Transitioning from a walker to a cane or no assistive device at all will occur as your strength and balance improve.

OUTPATIENT THERAPY

- Patients typically attend outpatient therapy for 6 – 8 weeks after surgery.
- How often you attend therapy per week will likely be decreased over time as you improve.
- As your therapy frequency decreases, we will expect more physical activity at home.
- You will be discharged from therapy once all of your goals have been met (ROM, strength, correct gait pattern and balance).
- After discharge, you may slowly resume your prior level of activities as you feel comfortable.

THINGS TO WATCH FOR AT HOME

- **Signs of infection**
(excessive redness, swelling, fever, excessive drainage)
- **Dislocation**
(sudden pop and pain, or inability to move joint)
- **Blood Clot**
(redness and swelling usually in calf, or groin, low grade temp)
- **Pulmonary Emboli**
(Sudden chest pain, or shortness of breath)
- **Excessive bleeding from blood thinner**
(bloody nose, blood in stool).

CONGRATS!

We thank you for choosing Prowers Medical Center for your joint replacement procedure. We know that this information will help you be better prepared before surgery, understand what to expect the day of surgery, and also realize how hard you will need to work after surgery. Remember, we are here to help you, answer your questions and provide frequent intervention throughout this process. After recovery, we encourage you to stop in, call us just to say hi, or to ask questions as they arise.

