

BEFORE DISCHARGE

- ◇ The average length of stay for a routine Total Knee Replacement is 3-5 days. On the day of your discharge you can aim to be collected at approx. 11am unless your nurse tells you otherwise.
- ◇ Depending on your previous level of walking, you should be fully independent with a suitable walking aid, i.e. crutches, before you leave the hospital.
- ◇ Your Physiotherapist will advise you on when to progress from using the crutches.
- ◇ You will have an ***Out-Patient Physiotherapy*** appointment arranged for you around two weeks after your surgery. It is very important that you attend these appointments in order to achieve satisfactory range of movement and to strengthen your new knee.
- ◇ ***Rest is very important*** in your recovery, please ensure that you have somewhere at home that is easily accessible where you can lie down and elevate your leg to reduce swelling.
- ◇ When you are coming in for surgery please remember to bring your physiotherapy information and exercise sheets along with appropriate footwear. If you have a pair of crutches at home, bring them with you and we will assess if they are suitable for use.

NOTES/QUESTIONS FOR YOUR PHYSIOTHERAPIST

PHYSIOTHERAPY DEPARTMENT
SOUTH INFIRMARY-VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
HOSPITAL
021-4926656



TOTAL KNEE REPLACEMENT PHYSIOTHERAPY INFORMATION

After your surgery physiotherapy aims to:

- ◇ Help restore your independent mobility or walking using a walking aid that is the most suitable for you.
- ◇ Educate you on exercises to help restore strength and range of movement of your operated leg.
- ◇ Advise you on how you can promote recovery when discharged home

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EXERCISE FOLLOWING SURGERY

Exercise is very important after your Knee Replacement. A copy of appropriate exercises will be given to you in a separate booklet. You may start practicing some of these exercises before your operation if they do not aggravate your knee pain.

You may commence exercises in bed within the first 24 hours after your surgery and **before** the physiotherapist sees you.

These exercises will:

- ◇ Help minimise the risk of blood clotting.
- ◇ Help strengthen your muscles and maintain joint movement.
- ◇ Prepare your operated leg for walking when appropriate.

PHYSIOTHERAPY AFTER YOUR SURGERY

- ◇ The Physiotherapist will see you for the first time either on the same day of your surgery or the day after, this will depend on the time of your surgery.
- ◇ You should be able to put full weight through your operated leg when walking unless otherwise instructed by your Consultant or Physiotherapist.
- ◇ That first day we will aim to help you to stand and to walk with either a frame or crutches.
- ◇ Each day thereafter you will progress to walking confidently by yourself with a walking aid, i.e. crutches.
- ◇ You will practice the use of steps/ stairs with the Physiotherapist.
- ◇ There is no physiotherapy provided over the weekend.
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FOOTWEAR

It is recommended that you bring a supportive pair of shoes with you in order to walk comfortably and safely following your surgery. Something you can easily slip your foot into and out of would be ideal, as you may have swelling following the operation. It is best to avoid walking in backless slippers.

PAIN & SWELLING

It is normal for your leg to feel painful and swollen after a Total Knee Replacement. Bruising is also expected.

It is very important that you take pain medication as prescribed to you. It is also very important to manage your swelling by

1. Resting appropriately: balance your time between rest and exercise, by doing a little exercise often.
2. Resting in bed for periods throughout the day.
3. Avoid sitting for long periods
4. Elevation: when sitting and lying in bed.
5. Ice application.

IMPORTANT: At home if your calf or thigh becomes very swollen, painful, hot, red, or shiny you must visit your GP immediately to rule out the possibility of a DVT (clot).

ICING

Wrap an ice pack in a pillow case to protect your skin from an ice burn. Leave for 10-15 minutes checking the skin regularly.

Ice 3-4 times per day if necessary.

CAUTION: if you have reduced skin sensation/circulatory problems seek advice from your physiotherapist or doctor before using the ice.