



Vipul Dua M.D., LLC  
www.drVIPULduaorthopedics.com

## TOTAL KNEE REPLACEMENT

Following your total knee replacement surgery, you will remain in the hospital for 1-2 days prior to being discharged home with services. If you are deemed to be unsafe for home discharge, the hospital will arrange for you to go to a rehab facility for a short time.

### Activity

You can bear full weight on the operative extremity immediately following your procedure. Physical therapy will have you walk a couple hours after surgery completion once your spinal block wears off. Initially you will use a rolling walker but can quickly progress to a cane if stable. Stairs can be performed the same day as well. It is essential to start range of motion and strengthening exercises immediately in order to have the best outcome. **You will wear a knee immobilizer at night for the first 2 weeks after surgery** in order to maintain knee extension while sleeping. The duration of physical therapy will depend on your progress and healing. Everyone is different. Apply ice to your knee in order to help keep the swelling down.

### Dressing

A large dressing will remain on the operative extremity for the first 48 hours after surgery. Once this is removed, the bandage directly over your incision will remain in place for 7 days. If it becomes saturated with blood/drainage, it will be changed by the visiting nurse/physical therapist. Your incision will be closed with skin glue. **You may shower 3 days after your procedure if your incision is healing appropriately and without drainage (keep dressing on but keep as dry as possible).** Do not soak the incision! Avoid using creams, lotions, and other topical products on the incision until you are evaluated at your post-op appointment.

### Deep Vein Thrombosis Prevention

While at the hospital you will have mechanical compression stockings in place to keep blood circulating in your legs. When you are not doing your physical therapy exercises, it is beneficial to perform ankle pump exercises frequently. **You will be placed on an oral anticoagulant (i.e. Aspirin) which will need to be taken for 6 weeks.** If you are on an anticoagulant for medical reasons, this medication will be resumed soon after surgery. Consider purchasing thigh high compression stockings for when you're discharged home. Swelling in the operative leg is expected.

### Driving

You may begin driving a couple weeks after surgery if you can sit comfortably in the car and are able to control the gas/break pedals without difficulty. **Do not take narcotic pain medication prior to driving!**

### Work

Timing for returning to work will depend on the field of work you're in. Overall, sedentary workers, such as secretaries, are able to return to work at around 4-6 weeks. More strenuous jobs such as construction workers and manual laborers may need closer to 2-3 months. Temporary restrictions may be necessary initially. Everyone recovers differently so we will determine appropriate return to work dates once you're evaluated at the office.



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### **Pain Management**

You will be discharged on a list of medications to help control your pain. It is important that you stay on top of your pain and take the medications as directed. Consider taking the narcotic pain medication just prior to working with your physical therapist in order to get the most out of your session. If you need a refill of your pain medications call the office ahead of time. **Please allow us 24-48 hours to complete your request.** Prescriptions will only be filled during normal business hours. **Narcotics cannot be called into the pharmacy so you will need to pick up a prescription at the office.**

### **Antibiotic Protocol**

Following your procedure, **you will need to take an antibiotic prior to any dental work** in order to prevent an infection in your knee. Our antibiotic protocol will be given to you and reviewed at your first post-op appointment. The protocol is also available on the website in the Surgery section under Antibiotic Protocol . **Please hold off on any dental work for at least 6 weeks following your surgery.** If your dentist is unwilling to provide you with the antibiotic prescription our office will gladly call the medication into your pharmacy.

*Please call the office immediately if you develop any of the following worrisome symptoms:* High spiking fevers >101 degrees Fahrenheit, chest pain, shortness of breath, severe uncontrolled pain, calf swelling/tenderness, spreading redness around incision, drainage from incision, or inability to move extremity. If you experience these symptoms outside of normal business hours, the office will connect you to the physician on call.