



Palmetto
Bone & Joint, P.A.

**Chapin Orthopedic Surgery Center
Outpatient Total Joint Program**

Prior to Surgery

Smoking:

It is recommended that if you are a smoker, you should try to stop prior to surgery. If you cannot or do not wish to stop smoking before surgery, then we must make you aware that smoking can decrease your ability to heal and slow the healing process down.

Lab Work/ EKG/ Clearance:

As stated earlier, along with your surgeon the anesthesiologist may require certain test be completed prior to surgery. Such as blood work, EKG, cardiac and/or medical clearance from primary care physician or cardiologist is applicable.

Medications:

- Discontinue use of Aspirin, Aspirin-like products, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications, vitamins and herbal supplements one week prior to surgery.
- If you are taking blood thinners, please let us know. These medications need to be stopped within a certain time frame prior to surgery and we will need to check with your prescribing physician to stop these medications.
- Only take the morning medications that the pre-operative nurse instructs you to take.

Medical Clearance:

Your surgeon or anesthesiologist will sometimes require clearance from your primary care physician and/or cardiologist is needed. Without this clearance (if requested) surgery cannot proceed so it is important to get this done.



After Surgery

First 48 hours after surgery:

- Pain is an expected part of recovery. Pain levels differ for each person.
- Ice packs help manage your pain and swelling. You will be given a cool/compression sleeve that comes with two gel pads to use. The device should be used for 20 minutes 4-6 times a day.
- Oral pain medications will be prescribed to you.
- Elevate the extremity to reduce swelling (knees). Using a pillow under entire leg down to the ankle not just under the knee.
- Home health visit to assess wound, remove drain if applicable, and assess over all recovery status.
- Home health therapy may be started.
- Do not drive before your first post-op appointment and never drive while taking narcotic pain medications.
- Swelling is common with increase in activity, keep your leg elevated above the level of your heart if this occurs and apply ice. (for total knee).
- Do not sit for longer than 45 minutes at a time and use chairs with arms.
- Do not sit in bed all day, getting up and moving relieves some of the discomfort.
- Your incision will be covered with a dressing. This needs to stay clean and dry until you re instructed to remove it. Call your surgeon if there is increased drainage, redness, warmth or fever >101 over 24 hours.
- Use your assistive devices for balance as instructed. You should improve from a walker or crutches to a cane by first post-op visit.
- Home Health services should be in place at this time for nursing care or therapy. Whichever your physician feels you may need.

Weeks 1-6

- Walk without assistance on a level surface with a walker, crutches, or cane as appropriate. Follow your therapist advice and orders.
- Climb stairs as tolerated safely.
- In and out of bed without help.
- In and out of chairs or car without help.
- You may have to use a bench seat to shower once staples are removed and if incision is healing appropriately.
- Resume your activities of daily living such as cooking, light chores, walking and going outside. Keep moving as much as tolerable.
- Continue to ice and elevate to reduce swelling and help alleviate pain. Eat a well-balanced diet and adequate fluid intake (8 glasses a day).

After Surgery

Weeks 6-12

- Should be walking using a cane.
- May be able to return to work depending on type of labor.
- Avoid heavy lifting.
- Avoid standing or sitting for long periods of time.
- Avoid frequently climbing stairs or ladders.
- Avoid kneeling, stooping, bending forward or any position that may put the new joint under strain.
- Continue exercise program as prescribed.

Three Months:

- Be realistic and pace yourself. Increase walking distance and activity.
- Keep cane in your vehicle to aid with discomfort or uneven ground
- This is the first of many milestones that we contact you with our survey to assess your recovery and abilities after your procedure.

Six Months:

- This is the second milestone that we contact you to assess you again and track what progress you have made.
- This is a time you want to think of lifelong goals. Increase in body weight can put stress on the joints so try to maintain a healthy weight.
- Ask your surgeon or therapist about sports, exercising, and increased activities and what limitations there may be.
- We will also be contacting you at your 1 year and 2 year surgery anniversary mark to assess your progress.

Potential Complications

Blood Clots:

These are a potential complication with any surgery. Blood clots can form in the leg and travel to your lungs and cause serious complications. Prevention is key. Some Symptoms may include:

- Pain and/or redness in your calf and leg unrelated to your incision.
- Shortness of breath and chest pain or pain when breathing.
- Increased swelling in your calf, thigh, ankle, or foot. Increased skin temperature at the site of incision.

You can lower your risk by:

- Exercising and staying active.
- Taking blood thinners as prescribed.
- Wearing support stockings.

Surgical Site Infection:

Some common symptoms can include:

- Increased swelling redness and pain around the area where you had surgery.
- Any drainage, in particular, cloudy fluid from your wound.
- Fever.

Prevention

Always let your physician or dentist know prior to having any new procedure. Your new joint is artificial and doesn't have your bodies natural protection against infection. Your physician ordering the procedure may want to include an antibiotic to take prior to any new procedure to help prevent infection.

Take antibiotics prior to new procedures like:

- Dental
- Colonoscopy/endoscopy/sigmoidoscopy/cystoscopy Surgery (any procedure)
- Barium enema
- Cardiac procedures

Before Surgery Checklist

- I have had home health teaching with site visit.
- I have received my pre-admission interview by the facility nurse and been given pre-operative instructions and arrival time for surgery.
Arrival time _____ Date _____
- I have completed any ordered lab work, EKG, or clearances.
Completed Date _____
- I have arranged someone to be my coach I care giver immediately following surgery for up to 24-48 hours. Care Giver _____
- I have arranged for a driver to my follow-up appointments. Driver _____
- I have all of the equipment that I have been instructed to use such as walker, crutches, etc (if applicable).
- Remove nail polish and/or artificial nails.
- Shower and wash hair night before. You may be given a special scrub called Hibiclens by your surgeon for you to use at home.
- Get a good night's sleep.
- Stay well hydrated but do not eat or drink anything after midnight unless you were instructed to do so by the preoperative nurse.
- Do not use lotions or powder.
- Do not shave.



To Improve Health Before Surgery

(Recommendations only, Not required)

- I quit smoking to improve healing and decrease risk of infection.
- I have had dental check up to ensure dental needs are taken care of.
- I have received the flu vaccine per primary care physicians' recommendations (September - March).
- I have received the Pneumonia vaccine per primary care physicians' recommendations.



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