



Knee Replacement Surgery
Physical Medicine and
Rehabilitation



The Focus of Rehabilitation

The focus of our rehabilitation program at CPMC is to make you as independent as possible in your daily life activities. The following guidelines have been developed by therapists and your medical team to ensure your best possible recovery. It is important to follow these guidelines to experience a successful recovery from your total knee replacement surgery. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask the doctors, nurses, and therapists caring for you.

Notes and Questions

Going Home

This guide provides you with information on sitting and moving safely after surgery. The illustrations will help you to properly perform your daily activities and exercises. Our rehabilitation program will help you meet the following goals.

- Getting in and out of bed by yourself.
- Walking on your own at least 50 feet with your walking device.
- Bathing and dressing yourself.
- Using the toilet or commode without help.
- Standing for short periods at a counter or sink to do simple tasks.

Activities of Daily Living

Before you leave the hospital, you must meet the goals set by your physical and occupational therapists. They will prepare you for activities of daily living and instruct you on the best ways to move about.

Standing



- Move your operated leg forward and push off the arm rests of the chair to stand up.
- Once you have your balance, reach for the walker.

Using a walker to begin walking, be sure to:



- Move the walker forward.
- Then, take a small step into the walker with your operated leg.
- Push down on your hands when you step forward with your non-operated leg.
- Land on your heel and push off your toes when walking (a heel/toe pattern of walking). Take an equal number of steps with each foot. Make each step the same length.
- Lean your back against the wall for support if you stop to talk with someone or if you become tired.
- Frequent, short walks are recommended.

Dressing

Your occupational therapist will instruct you to dress, sometimes using adaptive equipment.



- **Putting on your pants:** Put the operated leg into the pant leg first. Then put the non-operated leg into the other pant leg.
- **Removing your pants:** First, remove the non-operated leg from the pant leg. Then, remove the operated leg from the other pant leg.
- **Tying your shoes:** Use elastic shoelaces or slip-on shoes.

Homemaking

- Sit for rest breaks as needed.
- Slide objects along the countertop rather than carrying them. Use a utility cart with wheels to transfer items to and from the table.
- Attach a bag or basket to your walker or wear an apron to carry small items.
- Use a long-handled reacher (“grabber”, “pick-up stick”) to reach objects on the floor.
- Remove all throw rugs and long electrical cords to avoid tripping in your home.
- Watch out for slippery/wet areas on the floor.

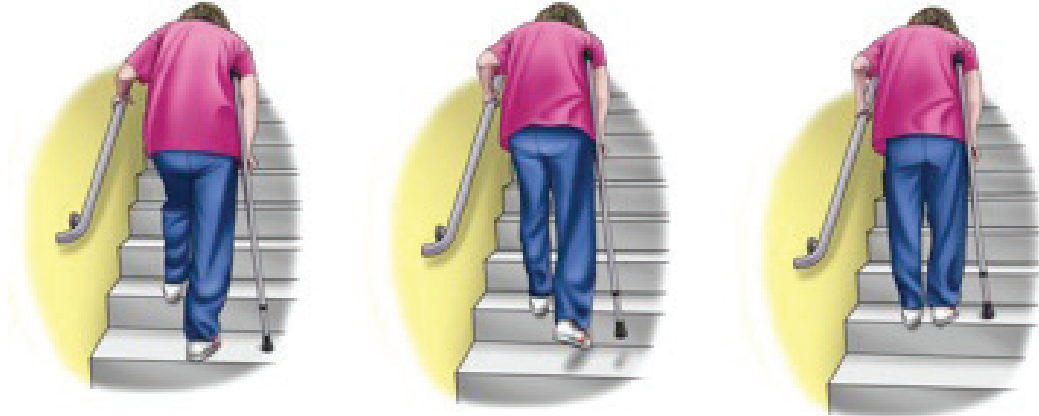
Bathing or showering

You may shower when approved by your doctor. You and your occupational therapist will discuss the correct technique to step into your shower stall or bathtub at home. We recommend that you install a **hand held shower hose**, which better enables you to bathe below your waist.



- If you do not have **non-skid strips** glued to the floor of your shower stall or bathtub, carefully place a **non-skid rubber bath mat** on the floor of the stall or tub. **Before starting the water**, be sure that the suction cups on the underside of the mat are pushed down against the floor of the tub or stall.
- **Do not sit on the bottom of the bathtub** to bathe during your recovery. Moving in and out of this position causes too much bending of your new knee.
- Use **liquid soap** to avoid dropping a bar of soap.
- A **long-handled bath sponge** will help in bathing below the knees.
- During the first few showers at home, we recommend that you **shower no longer than 10 minutes**, using lukewarm water and keeping the bathroom well ventilated.
- If needed, your therapist will discuss how to cover your incision for bathing.

Climbing up stairs



- Use a hand rail (if available) to climb stairs.
- Lead with your non-operated leg, then your operated leg, and finally your crutches or cane.
- A family member should stay one step below, standing on your operated side, when helping you climb stairs.

Going down stairs



- Use a hand rail (if available) to go down stairs.
- Lead with your crutch or cane, then your operated leg, and finally your non-operated leg.
- A family member should stay one step below, standing on your operated side, when helping you go down stairs.

Getting into a car



- Be sure the passenger seat is pushed all the way back.
- Recline the seat back as far as possible.
- With your walker in front of you, slowly back up to the car seat.
- Sit on the car seat.
- Swing your legs into the car.
- When traveling, make frequent stops and get out and walk around.

Getting out of car

- Push the seat all the way back.
- Recline the seat all the way back.
- Lift your legs out. Place the walker up in front of you and stand up on the unaffected leg.

Tips for Your Recovery

Caring for your knee when in bed

- Pump your ankles up and down 10 times every 2 hours to maintain blood flow (circulation) to your lower legs.
- Do not lie in bed with a pillow under your knee. This will interfere with regaining full knee mobility.

Caring for your knee during the day

- Avoid sitting and/or standing for long periods (no more than 30 minutes in one place). Changing position frequently will increase blood flow, decrease joint stiffness, and decrease post-operative leg swelling.
- To decrease pain, inflammation and swelling, ice can be placed on your knee for 15 - 20 minutes every hour or as tolerated.
- Follow your home exercise program given to you by the hospital physical therapist.

Caring for your knee at home

- **Ask your doctor when:**
 - You can take a shower.
 - You may start to drive and return to work.
- **Begin your home exercise program:** An important part of your recovery is following a home exercise program. When muscles are not used, they become weak and do not work as well in supporting and moving the body. Surgery can correct the knee problem, but the muscles will remain weak unless you strengthen them with regular exercise. To start the home exercise program, your therapist will teach you how to perform these exercises. Do your home exercise program as prescribed by your physical therapist.

Exercises

Your therapist will show you how to do your exercises and will tell you how often to do them.

Ankle Pumps

Bend ankles to move feet up and down, alternating feet.

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ sessions each day.



Quad Sets

Slowly tighten muscles on thigh of straight leg while counting out loud to _____.

Repeat with other leg to complete set.

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ sessions each day.



Gluteal Squeezes

Squeeze buttocks muscles as tightly as possible while counting out loud to _____.

Repeat _____ times.

Do _____ sessions each day.



Heel Slides

Make sure bed is flat.
Bend knee and pull heel toward buttocks.
Hold ____ seconds. Return.
Repeat with other knee to complete set.
Repeat ____ times.
Do ____ sessions each day.



Short Arc Quads

Place a rolled towel under your knee.
Raise the lower part of your leg until your knee is straight.
Repeat ____ times.
Do ____ sessions each day.



Straight Leg Raises

Bend one leg. Keep other leg as straight as possible and tighten muscles on top of thigh.
Slowly lift straight leg ____ inches from bed and hold ____ seconds.
Lower it, keeping muscles tight ____ seconds.
Relax.
Repeat ____ times.
Do ____ sessions per day.



Hip Abduction

Keep your toes pointed toward the ceiling.
Move your leg out to the side as far as possible.
Slowly return to the starting position and relax.
Repeat ____ times.
Do ____ sessions each day.



Long Arc Quads

Straighten operated leg and try to hold it ____ seconds.
Repeat ____ times.
Do ____ sessions each day.



Knee Flexion with Buttock Scoot

A. Pull foot back, bending the knee until stretch is felt. Hold at least 10 counts.
B. Leave foot where it is and scoot buttocks forwards to increase the stretch. Hold again for at least 10 counts.
Repeat ____ times.
Do ____ sessions per day.



Quad Contraction

Contract your quadriceps (front of thigh muscle) and straighten knee (push back of knee towards floor).
Hold for 5-10 seconds.
Repeat ____ times.
Do ____ sessions each day.



