

KNEE REPLACEMENT AFTER SURGERY IN THE HOSPITAL

You will be restricted to bedrest until the first day after surgery. You will be out of bed and into a chair the morning of the first day after surgery and then walking with your physical therapist.

You may require blood transfusion. This is unusual. Platelet gel will help to significantly decrease the possibility of transfusion, but it cannot completely eliminate it.

Medications to expect - besides your regular medication that you took before the operation, a blood thinner of some form (this will either be Coumadin, Lovenox, or aspirin) will be given on a daily or a variable schedule. Intravenous antibiotics will be given for the first 24 hours. Pain medications will be given either through a special pump, by a shot, or by pills, and for the first 24-36 hours, you will have an epidural catheter in your back which will help to decrease your pain. This catheter will be removed in approximately 24-36 hours after surgery.

Blood samples will be drawn from you frequently so your surgeon can determine if you need a blood transfusion or any adjustments in your medications.

Use the special breathing machine and breathing exercises to clear your lungs to prevent pneumonia or a condition that is common called atelectasis.

You will have pumps on your feet, and these pumps are very important and help to prevent blood clots, but it is important that you comply and wear these at all times while you are in bed. If you are in bed and they are not on your feet, call your nurse and have the nurse place them back on your feet.

You will most likely have a compression stocking placed on your operated leg after the first dressing change. We like for you to wear this during the day to decrease your amount of swelling. Decreasing the swelling will decrease your pain. It can be removed at night.

Do your bedside exercises as directed by your surgeon or physical therapist.

Physical therapy will start early in your hospital stay. Your surgeon and physical therapist will discuss your goals. When these are satisfactorily met, you will be able to go home from a physical therapy standpoint.

Safety is important in all aspects of your activities. If you have questions concerning any precautions, ask our very knowledgeable orthopedic nursing staff, your physical therapist, or your surgeon.