
Hospital to Home

Surgery

A knee or hip replacement surgery typically takes 45 to 60 minutes. Revision surgery, redoing a previously placed prosthesis, requires a longer operation, depending upon the complexity of the surgery. After your surgery, you will go to the recovery room for approximately one hour and then to your room on the joint replacement floor. During surgery, your family can relax in the hospital atrium and your surgeon will contact them immediately following your operation.

Most patients will have a regional anesthesia, utilizing specific nerve blocks designed for hip or knee replacement. In addition, medicine is injected and is used in and around the replaced joint to reduce post-operative pain. These nerve block and injections last for the first 48 to 72 hours after surgery, reducing the need for oral pain medication. The anesthesiologist will give you a sedative medication to help you relax prior to surgery. You will be asleep for the actual surgery.

Post-op

Post-op pain medication will be prescribed for you after surgery. A multimodal approach is used. This means several different types of medication will be used to treat the different pain pathways in your body. It is very important for you to take deep breaths and cough two to three times every hour while you are awake. This helps expand your lungs to prevent lung complications.

Moving your ankles, also known as pumping, helps decrease the risk of blood clots in your legs. After a primary replacement surgery, you will be up walking the day of surgery. **Don't be afraid to move!** A physical therapist will instruct you in the use of a walker or crutches. An occupational therapist will help you with activities of daily living such as getting dressed. Discharge plans will be made for you. The vast majority of patients are safe and ready to go home on the first or second post-operative day. For example, if you have your knee or hip replacement on Tuesday, you will likely be ready to go home safely on Wednesday or Thursday. Bilateral knee patients may need to wait until Friday to go home. Once home, you will need to perform some simple range of motion exercises daily that we will teach you while in the hospital. Your family, friends or neighbors should be included in the plans for your rehabilitation at home and should check on you once a day if possible.