
Post-operative Instructions for Total Knee Replacement

Wound Care

Wear the TED stockings given to you at the hospital. They help control swelling in the leg. A non-stick dressing over the incision will help prevent the stocking from catching on the staples. You may begin showering once the wound is dry and is no longer draining. Pat it with warm water and soap. The staples will be removed in the office at your first post-op visit around two weeks after surgery. Some redness and warmth around the staples is normal.

Medication

Typically, you will need to take two medications at home after your surgery. One is a narcotic pain medication that you take as needed to help make you comfortable. This medication can cause nausea, so take it with food. You will also be required to take Aspirin 325mg twice daily for six weeks. If you are unable to take Aspirin or you have a medical condition that requires a different medication for thinning the blood you may be given a prescription for Xarelto or Coumadin. Take these as directed. If you have an allergic reaction, please call the office. We recommend that you take Colace 100mg twice daily, which is a stool softener, to prevent constipation. Miralax can be used with the Colace if you are still having constipation, which can be taken twice daily as needed.

Activity

You may bear weight as tolerated on the operative leg. You will need a walker or crutches for two to three weeks and possibly a cane for a few more weeks. You are to perform the flexion and extension exercises two to three times per day. When sitting, you should keep the leg elevated and out straight most of the time during the first few weeks after surgery. You also need to apply ice to your knee at least four times daily for 20 minutes at a time. You may walk as much as you are comfortable. Outpatient physical therapy will begin after your two week follow-up visit.

Follow-up

You will have follow-up visits occasionally after your two week visit. They will be at eight weeks post-op, one year, then every five years. After your surgery, you are required to take an antibiotic one hour before certain procedures such as, dental cleanings and procedures, colonoscopies, pap-smears, etc. Please contact our office so we may call this in for you.

When to Call Dr. Monesmith

1. Your thigh or calf becomes red, swollen, and painful.
2. Your incision has increased drainage.
3. You develop a fever over 101 or persistent low grade fevers.
4. For problems with blood pressure or other routine medications, call your internal medicine physician or your family physician.
5. If you have any concerns or questions, please call Kim, Dr. Monesmith's physician assistant, at 317.884.5347. For scheduling, please call 317.884.5342.