



## What Happens in Surgery?

- Remove damaged cartilage and bone
- Insert prosthetic knee
  - 1 piece into femur (thigh bone)
  - 1 piece into tibia (shin bone)
- Insert plastic spacer that recreates the smooth cushion of cartilage
- Optional: Reshape or replace patella (knee cap)
- Procedure typically takes 1-2 hours
- PT will likely visit you after surgery and have you walk before discharging you from hospital

## What to Watch for After Surgery



### Warning Signs of Infection

- Persistent fever (higher than 100)
- Shaking and/or chills
- Increasing redness, tenderness, or swelling of your wound
- Excessive draining of wound
- Excessive increase in pain with both activity and rest

### Warning Signs of Blood Clots

- Pain in your leg or calf unrelated to your incision
- Excessive tenderness or redness above or below your knee
- Increasing swelling of your calf, ankle, or foot

## Most Important To-Do's After Surgery



### Achieve full knee extension

- Extension is the ability to get your knee all the way straight and is extremely important in gait mechanics and other functional movements. The swelling and pain of surgery can make full knee extension difficult initially, so it is the number one thing to focus on right after surgery.
- The best way to work on this is by resting your leg in a straight position instead of letting it bend. It is more uncomfortable, but worthwhile long-term.

### Manage Swelling

- Ice, elevation, and compression will assist with this.
- Ice is often the most beneficial. Ice packs work as do ice machines which compress and circulate water around your joint
  - ~ Apply for 15-20 minutes at a time
  - ~ Protect skin and check for signs of ice burn
  - ~ Perform as often as desired throughout the day (try for at least 3x/day initially)

### Manage Pain

- Take pain medication as prescribed to keep it at a manageable level. There is little to no benefit to "toughing it out". Being in too much pain for a prolonged period will make it more difficult for your body to relax, heal, and ultimately recover.

### Drink plenty of water and ensure adequate sleep

- Both of these things will help with the general healing process

### Avoid Falls

- Falls are one of the biggest culprits of complications after surgery. While our knee is healing, it's imperative to avoid direct impact in order to avoid disruption of the implants.

## Preparing Your Home



- Move to downstairs room temporarily if you have stairs and no elevator
- Remove any area rugs that you could slip/catch on
- Shower may need: chair, grab bars.
- Toilet may need: grab bars, raised seat.
- Stretch strap and object grabber can also be helpful tools

## FAQ

### How often will I attend PT?

- Commonly, patients will attend 3x/wk for the first 2-3 weeks in order to manage swelling. It will then drop to 2x/wk for the majority of your rehab and possibly go down to 1/wk at the end of your recovery.

### How long will I attend PT after surgery?

- Most patients attend PT for 12 weeks after surgery. Varies on the individual depending on progress and patient goals.

### When will I feel "normal" again?

- The first 2 weeks after surgery are notoriously the hardest and most painful. After that, most patients will experience a gradual progression back to normal. Typically, patients are able to return to most of their normal activities at 6 weeks. Most will then report about 80% full recovery at 12 weeks and 90% at 6 months. Return to normal baseline takes around 1 year.

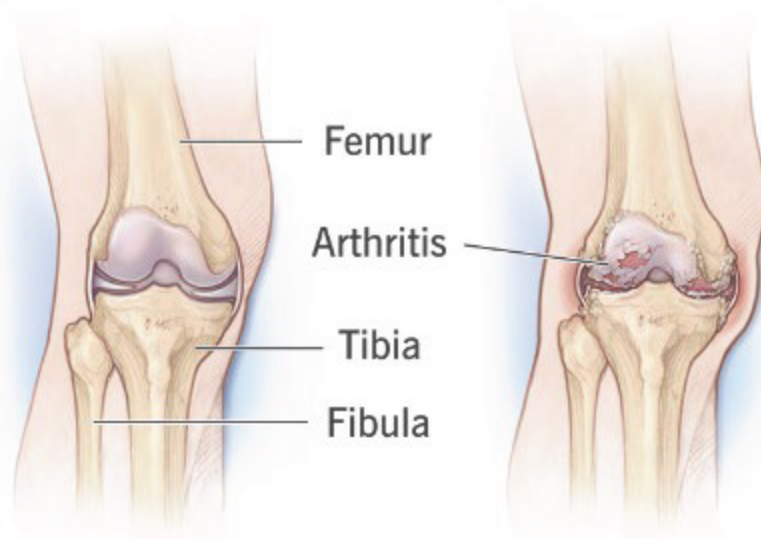
### How long will my knee replacement last?

- Most modern knee implants report lasting anywhere from 15 to 20 years.

# Knee replacement

Healthy knee

Knee with arthritis



New knee

