



The Washington Hospital

CENTER FOR ORTHOPEDICS AND NEUROSCIENCES

PEOPLE IN MOTION

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is my coach and what does my coach do?

- Your coach is someone whom you choose before surgery to support you through your recovery.
- Your coach can be your spouse, daughter, son, best friend, or a neighbor, anyone who is willing to help you through your joint replacement experience before, during and after your hospital stay.

Will I take medication to prevent blood clots after surgery?

- Yes. Your orthopedic surgeon will determine what type of medication according to your individual needs.

What are the signs and symptoms of possible infection?

- Drainage from the incision
- Unusual odor from the incision
- Redness/swelling at the incision
- Increase in pain
- Temperature above 100 degrees

How do I change my dressing? How often?

- Your wound care is ordered by your individual orthopedic surgeon and will be instructed to you by your nurse. The wound care instructions will be located on your discharge instruction sheet.

When can I shower?

- Your orthopedic surgeon will determine this on your day of discharge; specific instructions will be located on your discharge instruction sheet.

When can I start to drive?

- Your orthopedic surgeon will discuss this with you at your post operative office visit.

How soon after the surgery can I return to work?

- When you are able to return to work will be determined by your orthopedic surgeon and your individual needs.

When will I need to follow-up with the surgeon?

- Your follow-up visit with your orthopedic surgeon is usually 10-14 days after your surgery.
- This information will be included on your discharge instruction sheet.

How much weight can be put on the surgery leg?

- This will be dependent on your surgery and your surgeon's preference.
- This information is included on your discharge instruction sheet.
 - Weight Bearing as Tolerated (WBAT): able to put as much weight as you can tolerate.
 - Partial Weight Bearing (PWB): usually about 50% of your body weight, unless otherwise specified by your orthopedic surgeon.

Will I continue to wear the support stockings (TEDS) at home?

How long should they be worn?

- Yes. You may remove them at night before going to bed and reapply them in the morning. You must continue to wear them until the orthopedic surgeon tells you to stop.

How do I use the walker correctly?

- The proper sequence when using a walker is: walker, surgical leg, non-surgical leg.
- You will be instructed on use of the walker during your hospital therapy sessions.

Will I be able to go up and down stairs at home?

- While you are using the walker, you cannot go up and down stairs. When you have progressed to using a cane, you can go up and down stairs. When using a cane and the handrail for assistance, the proper sequence is:
 - Going up: non-surgical leg, surgical leg, cane
 - Going down: cane, surgical leg, non-surgical leg

What exercises will I need to do after I am discharged from the hospital?

- During your hospital stay, you will review your home exercise program with your physical therapist. These exercises will also be done at home.