

Total Knee Replacement Home Care Instructions

I sometimes tell my patients that after a total knee, "it takes you two weeks to forgive me, and two months to be glad you had it done." Although humorous, this statement does underscore the importance of time and dedicated therapy after a knee replacement that is required to do well. Try and adhere to the below guideline and engage in daily therapy towards ROM and strengthening.

-Dr. Michael Russonella

Activity	Don't plan any other strenuous activities until you have been cleared to do so by Dr. Russonella.
Pain Medication	You will be given a prescription for narcotic pain medicine before you leave the hospital. Take this medication only if needed to relieve severe pain. If needed, only take one pill every four hours. If your pain is not relieved by one pill, you make two pills as your next dose. You may also use Tylenol if you choose. Use caution when taking narcotic medications because they affect your ability to drive and concentrate. Be aware that pain medicine tends to cause constipation. Make sure that you drink plenty of water and make sure that you have a stool softener.
Ice	An excellent source for relief of inflammation, pain, stiffness, and swelling. Use it as often as 20 minutes out of every hour. You may continue to use ice for several weeks following surgery.
Wound Care	Each day, you should clean your wounds with alcohol and apply clean gauze to the wounds as long as the staples are in place. You will need to avoid water contact with the incision (no swimming or hot tub) until the staples are removed.
Return Visit	The office will call you to schedule your post-operative appointments.
Anti-Phlebitis Stockings	Continue to use these until you are spending more than 50% of your day out of bed. If you have a history of blood clots or phlebitis, you may need to use the stockings for a longer period of time.
Xarelto 10mg 3 Weeks (Blood Thinners)	If you have any questions about this medication, your consulting medical doctor will be happy to help you.
Be Aware of These Signs of Complications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Phlebitis: Painful calf swelling that is tender to the touch. The pain often increases when you flex your foot up. 2. Infection: Continued drainage that is not decreasing (some drainage is common early after surgery and usually decreases each day). Foul smelling drainage, increased skin temperature, increasing redness, and fever or elevated body temperature, may be signs of infection. A temperature during the night is common for the first two weeks after surgery.
Emergency	Notify the office if you develop a fever >101°F, with unusual increase in pain, redness, and warmth. Report any pus or unusual drainage to our office immediately. It could be a concern if your incisions swell or have drainage. If you encounter any problems, please call our office.

**** If you feel chest pain or shortness of breath, please go to the nearest ER for evaluation. Do not call the office or wait for an appointment; although extremely rare, this could be a blood clot in the lungs. ****