

Physical Therapy Guidelines and Beginning Exercises



Exercise:

- One of the primary complications of Total Knee Replacement is stiffness. You must force your knee to bend and straighten. The prescribed exercises may increase your pain but will not damage your knee replacement. Your pain will lessen over time with continued exercise.
- **Every waking hour work on your knee flexibility for 3 to 5 minutes.** One hour focus on bending your knee and the next hour focus on straightening your knee. For example: 1 o'clock bend and 2 o'clock straighten.



Walking

- Walk about 2-5 minutes each hour. Be careful not to overdo your walking as it will increase your swelling and pain. Continue to walk with your assistive device until directed otherwise.
- As you walk, try to focus on striking your heel to the ground and pushing off with the toe as well as bending your surgical knee as you swing it forward.
- Each time you stand, tighten the muscle on the front of your thigh and focus on straightening your knee.



Ice and Elevation

- Ice your knee for 20-30 minutes 3-4 times per day. Place an ice pack over the front AND back of your knee. Using a thin towel as a barrier between the ice and your skin.
- Lay flat on your back and elevate your knee above your heart 3-4 times a day.
- During times of inactivity, pump your foot up and down.



Medication

- Take your pain medication regularly as prescribed by your doctor.



When to Call Your Doctor

- Persistent redness,
- Increasing pain not relieved with pain medication and rest,
- Fevers 101 or greater or drainage that is past 7 days from surgery.

Stretching Exercises

Every waking hour work on your knee flexibility for 3 to 5 minutes. One hour focus on bending your knee and the next hour focus on straightening your knee.

For example: 1 o'clock bend and 2 o'clock straighten.

Straightening Exercises



Place a towel under ankle. Relax your leg, allow gravity to straighten knee. Work towards 30 second hold. Rest and repeat.

Or



Sit in chair. Rest heel on table or chair. Relax your leg and allow gravity to straighten knee. Work towards a 30 second hold. Rest and repeat.

Bending Exercises



Wrap a towel or strap around your foot. Slide your heel toward your bottom. Use the strap to pull your heel closer increasing the bend in your knee. Work towards a 30 second hold. Rest and repeat.

Or



Sit with your bottom back in chair. Slide your surgery foot beneath you. Scoot forward in your chair to increase the bend in your knee. Work towards a 30 second hold. Rest and repeat.

Strengthening Exercises

Complete 10 repetitions of the following exercises 2 times per day



Tighten your front thigh muscle on surgical side. Press the back of your knee into the mat/bed.



Place a towel roll behind your surgical knee.. Tighten the front of your thigh to straighten knee and lift heel from the mat/bed.

