

POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS: YOUR NEW KNEE: DO'S AND DON'TS

This is an instruction sheet for you to follow once discharged after your new knee replacement. We tried our best to include all common questions and concerns following surgery.

DO - Get up and walk several times daily. This is important for muscle recovery and also helps prevent blood clots. Walking is encouraged as long as the muscles are not becoming too sore.

DO - Find a comfortable sleeping position. You may sleep on either side or your back. *You do not need to place a pillow between your legs; however, some find this more comfortable.*

DO – TAKE YOUR PAIN MEDS as Prescribed; If you are having pain but aren't taking your pain pills, there isn't much more we can do for you!

DO – Use your walker/cane until you feel you can ambulate safely without it. This may take days or weeks, depending on your lifestyle.

DO – Wait until you are completely comfortable using your cane before driving a vehicle. You should be able to react quickly with **your operative leg. If you had Right knee replacement you may want** to wait a week or two. If you had Left knee replacement you may drive as soon as you feel comfortable.

DO – Elevate your operative leg several times daily. You should lay flat so your leg is **HIGHER than your HEART with 3-4 pillows**. This will significantly help with swelling.

DO – Apply ice to the knee for the first few weeks after returning home. Use ice on knee, calf, thigh, anywhere on your leg that is sore. After that, most people find moist heat to be more beneficial.

DO – Take a shower! You are permitted to shower after surgery.

Use only mild soap and water when cleaning your incisions. Silverlon dressing is usually removed after 7 days, it is waterproof. If you have a PICO dressing, please follow instruction sheet that was given to you in hospital.

DO – Participate in physical therapy. This can be done as an outpatient, or at home with home health services. Some people require a short inpatient stay at a rehab facility. During your hospital stay, a care manager will help determine which option is best for you. We usually recommend going to therapy 3 times per week for 3-6 weeks. Some people do require additional therapy depending on their individual needs.

DO – Continue your home exercises!! Make this a part of your daily routine.

DO – Take an antibiotic before any surgical or invasive procedure (*mostly dental, bowel or bladder procedures*). If you have a procedure scheduled and are not sure if antibiotics are needed, always double check. **Dental cleaning is the most important.**

DO – Expect some bruising and swelling for the first few weeks. This is where heat and elevation are most important. In some cases, bruising may go all the way to your toes. *Don't be alarmed, gravity will take it to the most dependent position.*

DO – Watch for signs of infection near your incision. These include redness, increased swelling or pain, drainage or temperature greater than 101°F. If any of these occur, please call the office. You will also notice steri-strips covering your incision; these will fall off after a few days.

DO – Follow up with the Physician Assistant, Heidi Murphy. This appointment is usually 2 weeks after surgery, and then at 4 weeks, your appointment will be with Dr. Tyndall. Make a list of questions and concerns.

DO – READ this AGAIN!

DON'T – Take a tub bath until your follow up appointment. Baths will increase your risk for infection, until your incision is fully healed.

DON'T – Be alarmed if you have pain in your upper thigh area. This is most likely from the tourniquet we use during surgery.

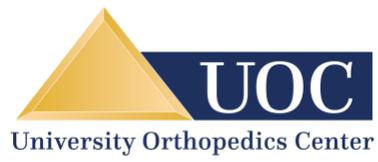
DON'T – Be afraid to take pain medications. Pain management is a very important part of your recovery. Initially, take pain medicines as prescribed by Dr. Tyndall. In time you will need less medication to be comfortable.

DON'T – Wait until you are out of medication to request a refill. Be sure to allow at least 24 hours for a new prescription. The new DEA law does not allow for us to call in narcotics of any type anymore. You will have to come to our office for a live prescription. You will not be able to get narcotic pills over the weekend. It is a good idea to check with the pharmacy before picking up your medication.

DON'T – Get discouraged if you are not getting better “fast enough”. You will continue to see improvements for up to a year!!

Dr. Tyndall can be reached at 814-574-1855. The office can be reached at 814-949-4050. If you are experiencing an emergency go to the ER or call 911. You can also reach Tara McCaulley, our Joint Coordinator, at 814-934-2001.

We realize each patient is unique and has his/her own needs. It is our hope that this information is helpful to you and your family following your knee replacement surgery. If you have any questions, please call University Orthopedics Center at (814) 231-2101 or (800) 505-2101.



William A. Tyndall, M.D., Ph.D.
3000 Fairway Drive, Altoona, PA 16602
814-231-2101

Revised

1/23/2015