

# What to Expect After Knee Replacement Surgery?

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Knee replacement surgery is a total knee replacement and is also called arthroplasty<sup>1</sup>. It is helpful in restoring knee joints which have been severely damaged. The surgery resurfaces parts of the knee joint that have been damaged and cause pain.

## **Why does someone need knee replacement surgery?**

There are many reasons why someone may need knee replacement surgery. Many different kinds of arthritis<sup>2</sup> like traumatic arthritis, osteoarthritis, and rheumatoid arthritis can affect knee joints.

- Traumatic arthritis is a result of injuries sustained to the cartilage of the knee.
- Rheumatoid arthritis is caused by inflammation of the synovial membrane which produces excessive fluid and causes stiffness and pain in the joint.

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/knee-replacement/about/pac-20385276>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/treatment-tests-and-therapies/knee-replacement-surgery-procedure>

- Osteoarthritis occurs in middle-aged and senior adults and is characterized by a degeneration of the joint cartilage and the bone in the knee.



### **How long does it take to recover?**

While recovery and rehabilitation depends on each individual and multiple factors that pertain to them, usually it takes around 3 months<sup>3</sup> for a patient to fully recover.

Devising a plan with your care provider initially can help you determine the pace of the recovery and rehabilitation process. Most plans aid the process of resuming daily activities independently quickly and efficiently by leaving the hospital sooner. They are also targeted towards avoiding potential complications.

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<sup>3</sup><https://www.arthritis-health.com/surgery/knee-surgery/what-expect-after-knee-replacement>

Some factors that affect a delayed recovery include age, smoking habits, and other medical conditions that may be deterrents in the healing process. However, patients who partake in exercise<sup>4</sup> prior to the surgery to prepare the knee have been observed to heal more quickly.

### **Correct movement of knee**

Post surgery, you need to take precaution and extra care to rehabilitate the knee and kick start the healing process so you can return to your daily routine as smoothly as possible. Utilizing the knee in the correct way is important as it determines the overall outcome of the surgery.

### **Walking with assistance**

Most surgeons encourage patients to regain movement in their muscles and begin walking with the help of assistance within twenty-four hours of the surgery. Two to three weeks into the surgery you will be able to walk using a cane or even without any kind of assistance as well.

### **Physical therapy**

Knee replacement surgery is generally less painful now due to advancements in the kind of techniques used to relieve pain such as spinal and nerve blocks. With the help of physical therapists, nurses and your surgeon, you can expect to return to your normal lifestyle soon enough. Your surgeon will guide you better to ascertain how long you may require physical therapy.

If you experience fever, swelling or bleeding, or increased pain where the incision is made during surgery, then notify your doctor immediately. Avoid driving until you have a doctor's approval or any activity that puts you at the risk of falling and damaging joints.

Houston Physicians' Hospital takes a comprehensive approach to providing care to patients with joint pain at our state of the art [Joint Solution Center](#). Our experts will guide you and provide individualized care to get the most effective treatment for joint pain. [Contact us](#) for more details.

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<sup>4</sup><https://www.verywellhealth.com/total-knee-replacement-preop-exercises-2696473>