



**HOME INSTRUCTIONS**

**PHYSICAL THERAPY**

Total Knee Replacement

Therapist \_\_\_\_\_  
(919) 681-2030

I. **Walking**

A. Use walker/crutches until your doctor says you no longer need them. Your foot should be flat on the floor with

- No weight
- Touch-down weight
- Moderate weight
- Weight as tolerated

on it. If allowed, make sure the foot does rest on the floor because it is less stressful to let it rest there than to hold it up.

B. Steps-always go up on your good leg first, followed by operated leg and assistive device. To go down: assistive device first, operated leg, then good leg. Always use a railing if one is available.

II. **Positioning**-do not stay in one position for long periods of time.

A. Straighten and bend knee every hour when awake.

B. Do not put a pillow under your knee while in bed or sitting. This will eventually keep your knee from straightening.

C. Avoid propping leg on footstool without support under entire leg for longer than thirty minutes. This could lead to dislocation of new knee.

III. **Swelling**-you can expect swelling in your knee and leg for a few months after surgery. In the event this should happen, or to prevent this, do the following:

A. Elevate your ankle and knee above your heart.

B. Put ice packs on operated knee (to make an ice pack, fill a plastic bag with ice, wrap a towel around your knee and put ice pack on top of the towel).

C. Do not put any form of heat on your knee. This includes creams such as Ben Gay, Icy Hot, etc.



- IV. **Infection/Phlebitis**-notify your doctor immediately if you notice the following symptoms.
- A. Different pain, redness, swelling, drainage, and/or fever chills in the operated knee. This could be a sign of infection in your new knee.
  - B. Redness, swelling, heat, and pain in your calf. This could be a sign of phlebitis.
- Note: With either condition – put yourself on bedrest until you have talked to your doctor.*
- V. **Activities of Daily Living:** next 6-8 weeks
- A. Do not drive until off crutches/walker.
  - B. Do not sit in warm tub; instead, you may shower once incision is healed.
  - C. Do not squat, stoop, or bend forward.
  - D. When sitting, always slide operated leg out in front of you to avoid forceful bending of the knee.
  - E. Avoid high-heeled shoes or slip-on slippers. Instead, wear good walking or tennis shoes.
  - F. Avoid scatter rugs. Put them up while walking on crutches/walker.
  - G. Avoid gaining excessive weight.
- VI. **Exercise**
- A. Follow the exercise instructions given by your physical therapist. Continue working on the exercises until you can straighten your knee completely and bend it to at least 90°.
  - B. Swimming may be started as soon as your incision heals. Be sure access into pool is a ramp or steps. Do not go up/down ladder or sit on side of the pool.
  - C. A stationary bike may be used 4 weeks after surgery with no resistance.
- VII. **Additional Activities:** 6-8 weeks after surgery
- A. Walking-excellent exercise to help build strength and general conditioning.
  - B. No tennis, jogging, or other sport that requires a lot of stop-start or jarring. These may loosen the prosthesis.
  - C. Golf-may begin after 3 months.
  - D. Swimming-for general conditioning and endurance.