



What to Expect after Uni/Total Knee Arthroplasty

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- 1. You will stay in the hospital 1-3 nights**
- 2. You are up and walking the day of surgery**
 - a. Cane or walker for support
- 3. Physical therapy (PT) should be done 2 times a week for at least 6 weeks and then down to 1 time a week until all goals are met**
 - a. The main goal is to focus on getting motion (flexion and extension) back as well as decreasing swelling
- 4. The first 6 weeks after surgery are the most challenging**
 - a. There will be a lot of swelling – above and below the knee
 - i. Elevate leg above your heart
 - ii. Ice at least 5-6 times a day (20 minutes on 1 hour off)
 - iii. Compression – use stockings, ace wrap or compression sleeve
 - iv. Ankle pumps (while leg is elevated, repeatedly point and flex foot)
 1. Pushes swelling out of leg and back into the lymph system
 - v. Swelling will come and go through out recovery
 - b. There will be pain
 - i. read through pain management handout
 - c. Range of motion will be limited – due to pain and swelling
 - i. You have to push through this to get motion back
- 5. Common post surgical symptoms**
 - a. Bruising above and below knee
 - b. Warmth to the touch - this is normal, but pay attention for symptoms of infection
 - i. Symptoms of possible infections
 1. Fever

2. Drainage
 3. Increase in pain – different then surgical pain
 4. Red streaks or increase in redness
 5. Unexplained loss of range of motion or the inability to walk
- c. Swelling
 - d. numbness
- 6. You will be on an anticoagulant medication for up to 6 weeks**
- a. Aspirin 325mg 1/day
 - b. Coumadin as directed (if you are at risk for a blood clot)
- 7. You will be prescribed pain medications**
- a. Read through prescription protocol
 - b. Keep written record of when you take medications
- 8. Showering:**
- a. 3 days after surgery
 - b. Let water run over incision
 - c. Do not scrub
 - d. Do not remove steri strips
 - e. Pat dry
 - f. Cover as needed
- 9. Wound management:**
- a. Keep steri strips on
 - b. Keep covered with non-adherent gauze
 - c. Will be checked at first post op visit
- 10. Driving depends on the following:**
- a. Which knee the surgery was on
 - b. Must be off narcotic medication during the day
 - c. Must be able to slam on the breaks
 - d. If you feel you are ready, practice in a parking lot before you go on the roads

***If you have any questions or concerns contact Sarah S at 651-351-2618**