



ORTHOPEDIC PHYSICIANS
ALASKA

A division of OrthoAlaska

Joint Replacement Roadmap

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Welcome

Having surgery to replace a joint is a very big decision. We are here to help you feel as comfortable and prepared as possible. This book will assist you with preparing for surgery, recovery and rehabilitation, and returning to your usual activities.

What does it take to get ready?

- Be your healthiest and prepare mentally
- Make plans to have help after surgery
- Get your home ready

What is Joint Replacement Surgery?

Joint replacement is a surgery to replace your painful arthritic joint with an artificial joint. Actively participating in Physical Therapy helps you regain movement and strength with your new joint to get you back to activity as usual.

2 months before surgery

Try to be your healthiest both mentally and physically

- **Quit Tobacco**-This is one of the most important things you can do when preparing for surgery. Tobacco use slows healing and increases risk of complications. Studies have shown that patients using tobacco before and after Joint Replacement surgery are 10 times more likely to need a joint revision surgery when compared to non-smokers.
- **Lose extra weight**-Maintaining a healthy weight can reduce post-operative complications and make assist in better mobility before and after joint replacement. Always check with your primary care provider before beginning a new exercise regimen or diet.
- **If you have Diabetes**-Work closely with your primary care provider to be sure your HgA1C and glucose levels are under control and optimal for surgery.
- **Dental Work**-Complete any dental work well in advance of surgery. Any active mouth infections, broken teeth, or open wounds need to be cleared at least 6 weeks prior to surgery.
- **Be Active**-Being as active as possible before surgery will help you maintain mobility and build strength for recovery after your joint has been replaced. Water exercises, walking and recumbent bikes are great options with low impact on painful joints.
- **Start planning help after surgery**-Your support person/people will need to stay with you at least the first 5-7 days after surgery.
- **FMLA/Short Term Disability Paperwork**-Email to oparecords@opaak.com. They will forward to your care team.

2 weeks before surgery

Get your home ready for recovery.

- Make it as easy and safe to move around as possible. Remove any tripping hazards.
- Create clear pathways that are wide enough for crutches or a walker
- If your bedroom is on the second floor, think about making a space to recover and rest on the first floor.
- Set up an area that will allow you to elevate your feet above your heart. Being able to properly elevate will reduce swelling.
- Think about installing grab bars in your bathroom and other safety equipment you may want. Ex: Shower chairs, toilet seat riser. These can be purchased at any local pharmacy or drug store.
- Place items you use regularly in easily assessable areas or within reach of your primary resting area.

Stay Healthy and Prevent Infections

- Wash your hands often. Stay away from friends or family that have been sick or are currently unwell.
- Do not participate in activities that could result in cuts or scrapes to your surgical site. Any skin breaks, abrasions, rashes, etc. could result in a delay of surgery.
- Follow your primary care providers recommendations and be sure you are taking any prescribed medications as directed to maintain peak health before surgery.

1 Week Before Surgery

Follow instructions from your preop appointment as well as these additional instructions

- Stop taking certain vitamins and supplements.
- Only take medications that have been approved and prescribed by your healthcare providers and surgical team.
- Do not shave or wax your surgical site at all. Even small cuts or nicks can result in a delay of surgery.
- Start showering daily 5 days before surgery. You will be provided with a germ fighting soap at your preop appointment. Use that soap the day before and morning of surgery.
- Prepare meals ahead of time to make things easier during your recovery.
- Call your physical therapy location to be sure your appointments are made and ready for your post-operative rehab.
- If you develop any fevers, coughs or infections, notify your providers team immediately.
- Prepare your Game Ready Ice Machine to bring with you to your surgical facility. If this machine has been ordered for you, it will be delivered to you by Alaska Medical Solutions. If your game ready unit has not been delivered, please call 907-563-4401.
- Run any errands that may make things easier for yourself after surgery such as grocery store, animal food, prescription refills, etc.

Day Before & Morning of Surgery

Enhance your recovery and prevent infection

- Do not eat anything after midnight the night before surgery.
- Drink plenty of water and clear liquids. This will give you energy and help you feel hydrated for surgery. This can also help reduce constipation after surgery.
- Shower with your germ fighting the night before and morning of surgery. Use this soap from the neck down, be sure to avoid contact with your face and genital area. Pour a small amount of the soap onto a fresh and clean washcloth with warm water and wash your body for at least 5 minutes to ensure maximum results.
- Avoid lotions, soaps, perfumes and deodorants at this time to ensure your skin stays prepped and clean.
- Avoid sleeping with any pets to reduce the risk of scratches, rashes or infections.

What to bring with you the day of surgery

- Picture ID and Proof of Insurance
- Any copayment that has been requested by your surgical facility
- List of medications
- Eyeglasses and hearing aids
- Container for dentures or retainers. Any dentures or retainers will be removed prior to surgery.
- Comfortable clothes, robe or pillow for use after surgery
- Personal hygiene items. (toothbrush, toothpaste, brush)
- Cell phone and charger
- CPAP Machines-if scheduled to stay overnight
- Game Ready Ice Machine
- Walker or crutches

What do I leave at home?

- Your Medications-you will be provided your medications during your stay
- All Valuables-Jewelry, wallets, money, wedding rings, etc.

Contact Information for local resources

Orthopedic Physicians Alaska

907-357-2267

Surgical Facilities:

Matsu Regional Medical Center: 907-861-6000

Surgery Center of Wasilla: 907-631-3578

Medical Equipment:

Alaska Medical Solutions: 907-563-4401

- Game Ready/CPMs

Turn a Leaf: 907-376-5708

- Used medical equipment-walkers/crutches

Procure Home Medical Equipment: 907-357-7882

- Medical equipment-walkers, crutches, toilet seat risers, grab bars, etc.



Recovering at home

How will I feel at home?

Moving around your home will be difficult for some time. Your support person should stay with you 24 hours a day for at least the first 5-7 days at home. You'll need your support person occasionally for about 1 more week.

It's normal to experience pain. Some pain may continue for 2-3 months. It will get better with time. Try shorter activities at first. Slowly increase your activities. Remember to take breaks. You may feel more pain for a while if you increase your activities too quickly.

What will my incision look like?

It's Normal to have swelling, bruising, or a change in skin color anywhere on your leg. Your incision may feel numb. You may hear clicking or noises from your joint.

Continue to take your pain medication, do your exercises, and ice and elevate your leg.

Wash hands or use alcohol sanitizer on your hands before and after touching your dressing, or the area around your incision.

If you experience severe pain or swelling, contact your orthopedic physician.

Orthopedic Physician Alaska at (907)357-2267, make sure to listen to the prompts to get you to the correct team.

How can I reduce pain and swelling?

- Lay flat and elevate your leg 2-3 feet above your heart for 30 minutes, or until some swelling decreases. Do this often throughout the day.
- Apply an ice pack to your joint for 20 minutes every hour when awake.

- Take your pain medication as prescribed. Its harder to control pain when you miss doses of medication. Follow the schedule provided by your surgeon, and use less as pain improves.
- Do not leave your leg down for long periods of time.

Your care at home:

- Rest when you feel tired.
- Eat a healthy diet with fruits, vegetables, lean protein foods, and whole grains. Limit fats, sweets, and alcohol. Drink plenty of water. Do not drink Alcohol while on narcotic pain medication.
- Prevent constipation by eating high-fiber foods. Or take a fiber supplement daily, or stool softener and drink plenty of water. If constipation does occur, you may take OTC Miralax, Or Magnesium Citrate
- You may shower the day after your surgery, as long as you feel secure in your shower or have help. Do not use a pool or hot tub.
- If you had knee surgery, help your knee straighten by keeping a rolled towel under your ankle when lying down, making sure the towel is placed under the ankle to keep your heel from touching the bed. This will help reduce the risk of skin problems. Do not put anything under your knee because this will prevent straightening.
- Help prevent blood clots. Bend both ankles to move feet up and down. Do big movements. When awake, repeat 10 times each hour until you're up and moving around regularly.
- Help prevent skin problems. When sitting in a chair or lying in bed, be sure to reposition your body frequently until you are up and moving around regularly

Moving around at home:

- If you have had hip surgery, use your walker or crutches for two weeks or until you have discussed it with your doctor.
- If you have had knee surgery, use your walker or crutches for up to two weeks or until your physical therapist tells you to stop.
- Limit walking to around your house and going to appointments for 2-3 weeks. Begin walking outside when your physical therapist or doctor feels you're ready.

Living with your new joint

Returning to activities/ Common questions:

Everyone recovers at their own pace. You might need months to feel better. Getting back to normal will take time and effort. Doing your exercises as ordered will help you get better sooner.

Answers to common questions:

When can I drive?

Check with your doctor. Usually people may drive about 4- weeks after surgery.

What about sex?

Waiting 4-6 weeks after surgery gives your new joint time to heal. It's normal to have less sexual desire while your body is healing. If you had a hip surgery, follow your hip precautions during sexual activities.

When can I travel?

It's best not to travel long distances for 6-8 weeks after surgery. For 3 months after surgery, there's a risk of developing blood clots in your legs. If you travel, stop often and walk to prevent blood clots. Stopping every hour to walk or stretch can help. If flying is necessary we ask our patients who are not on blood thinners already to start Aspirin 325mg, 1 tablet the day before the flight, 1 tablet the day of the flight, and 1 tablet the day after the flight. This is to be done on the return flight as well.

Will I set off the security alarm at the airport?

Yes, that's common. Allow some extra time at the airport. We do not provide a letter stating you have an artificial joint because airport security no longer accepts these letters.

Why do I need to move around soon after surgery?

Research shows getting weight on your joint soon after surgery helps you heal. After surgery you will stand and move with therapy.

How long will the new joint last?

This depends on your age, weight, and activity. On average, a new joint may last 15-20 years. You can help your new joint last longer by maintaining a healthy weight and doing activities with less impact. Walk instead of run. Try swimming or bicycling

Do I need antibiotics for dental work in the future?

We do recommend prophylactic antibiotic use following any Total Joint surgery. Prior to any “invasive procedure” that has a risk of bacterial seeding of blood. This includes extensive dental procedures, dental cleanings and routine checkup. This will be required for one year following surgery.

RX: Keflex or Amoxicillin (500mg dispense #4 tablets), 2 grams orally 1 hour prior to procedure, or Clindamycin, 600 mg 1 hour prior to procedure.

Do I need antibiotics for colonoscopy in the future?

Yes, procedures such as colonoscopy or cystoscopy are included. This will be a process for the remainder of life. The same medication as used for dental work is used for colonoscopy and cystoscopies.

Things you can do to prevent infection

You play an important role in your recovery process

Here are a few things you can do to help the healing process and prevent infection.

- **TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR.** Before your surgery, discuss other health problems, such as diabetes, with your doctor. These issues can affect your surgery and your treatment.
- **MEALS.** Try to eat a well-balanced diet rich in protein (lean meats and eggs) and antioxidants (fruits and vegetables).
- **SMOKING.** Quit smoking. People who smoke get more infections than those who don't.
- **SKIN.** Follow your doctor's instructions for cleaning your skin before your surgery. Hibiclens will be provided to you at your Pre-operative appointment.
- **UNDERSTAND.** Make sure you understand how to care for your wound before you leave the medical facility.
- **HAND WASHING.** Always wash your hands with soap and water before and after caring for your surgical incision.
- **INCISION CARE.** Keep your incision clean and dry, and covered with a clean bandage. Use freshly washed clothes, bedding, and towels. Talk to your doctor on how to best care for your incision.
- **WATCH FOR SIGNS OF INFECTION.** Call your doctor if you have a fever, redness and pain around incision, drainage, or a bad odor coming from your wound.

Remember, while you may start feeling better in a few days, it takes weeks for your body to heal.

Exercises before and after surgery

What exercises should I do before surgery?

Being active helps you prepare for surgery. It will also make it easier to move around after surgery.

- Practice the exercises on pages 20-22 to help your legs become stronger.
- Do things like swimming, bicycling, and water or chair exercises. Slowly increase your time up to 20 minutes
- Strengthen your arms and legs

What exercises will I do after surgery?

Your first goals after surgery will be to gain more motion in your new joint and reduce swelling.

- Do the exercises on pages 20-22. Your physical therapist will add more exercises when you're ready.
- Move your new joint often to increase motion

If you had knee surgery, help your knee straighten by keeping a rolled towel under ankle when lying down. Do not put anything under knee because this will prevent straightening.

Hip surgery: Special note

Your physical therapist will show you how to sit, stand, and move. You'll learn to move in ways that keep your new hip joint in place and prevent it from coming out of place. These movements are called hip precautions. Your occupational therapist will teach you how to get dressed.

Heel slides:

Lying down or sitting in chair

You can do this exercise while lying down or sitting in a chair. In a chair, use your other leg to help bend the surgical leg.

- Lie on your back with both legs straight, or sit in a chair with legs bent and feet on the floor.
- Slide your heel toward your buttock, bending the knee as far as you can
- Slide your heel back to starting position.

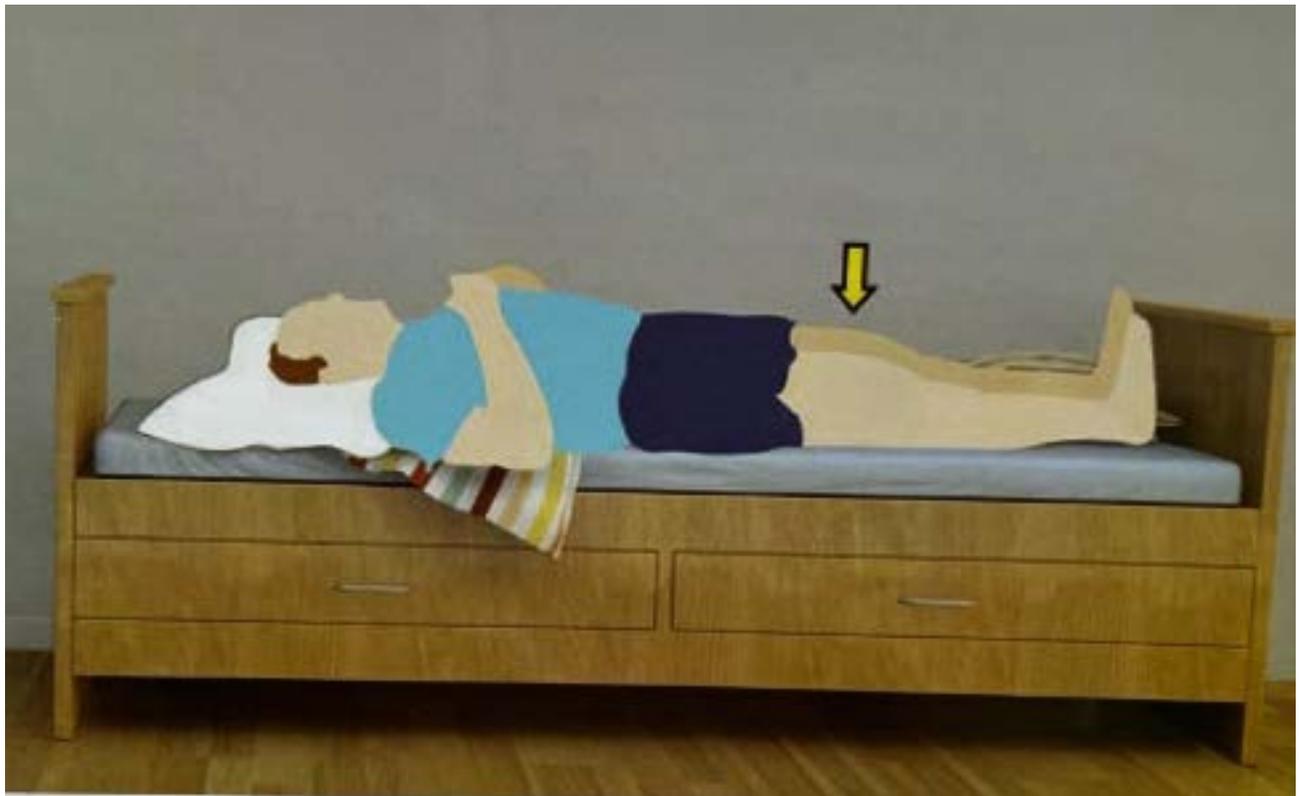
Repeat up to 10 times, at least 3 times each day.



Quad (thigh) squeezes:

- Lie on your back with both legs straight
- Push the back of your knee down toward the surface. This will tighten the muscle on the top of your thigh.
- Keep the muscle tight for up to 10 seconds, as you are able. Relax.

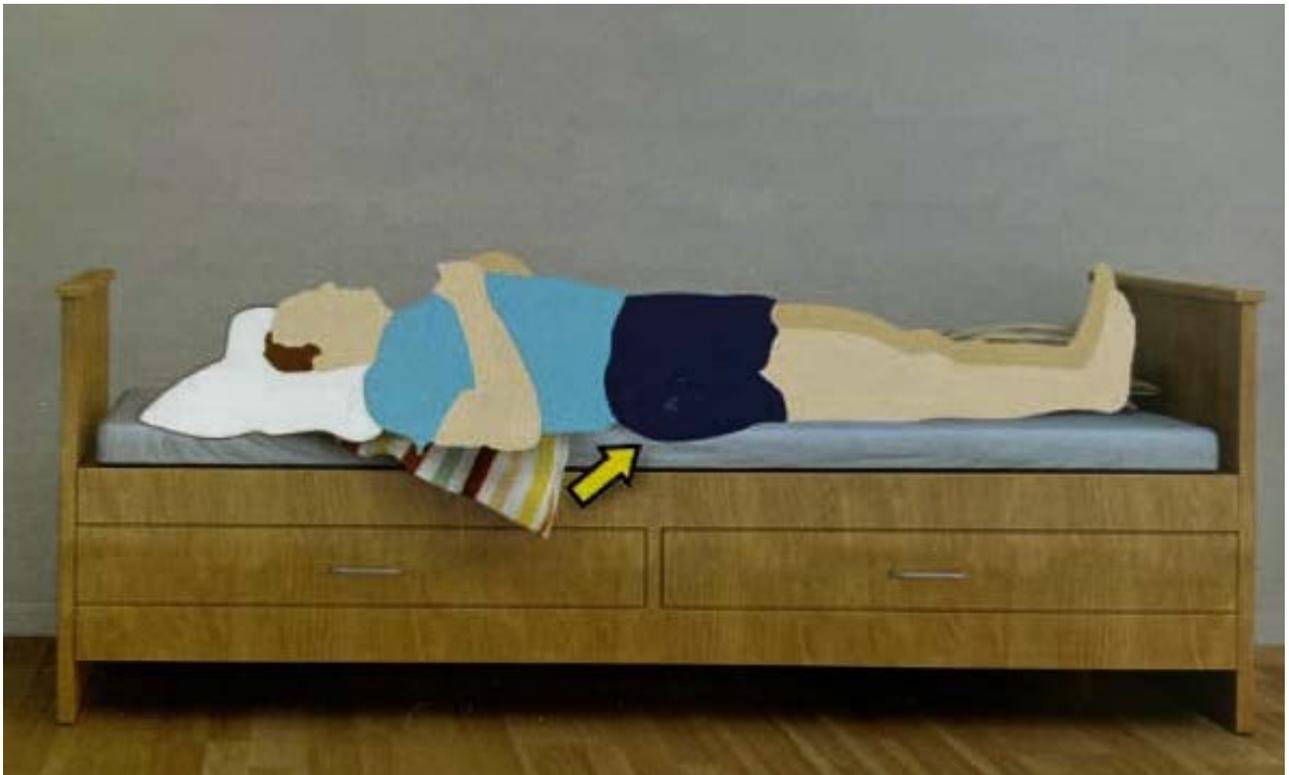
Repeat up to 10 times, at least 3 times each day.



Gluteal (buttock) squeezes

- Lie on your back with both legs straight.
- Squeeze your buttock muscles.
- Keep the muscles tight up to 10 seconds, as you are able.

Repeat up to 10 times, 3 times each day.



Member Resource Numbers

Orthopedic Physician Alaska 907-357-2267

Surgery facilities:

Surgery Center of Wasilla 907-631-3578

Matsu Regional Medical center 907-861-6000

Durable medical equipment facilities:

Alaska Medical Solutions (Game ready, CPM, SCD machine) 907-563-4401

Procure Medical (Walkers, wheel chairs, etc...) 907-357-7883

Valley Charities INC (walkers, wheel chair, etc...) 907-521-1908

In-Home Health care services:

Ancora Home Health anchorage 907-561-0700

Ancora Home Health Wasilla 907-561-9240

Wellspring Home Health 907-357-3654/3655

Wound Vac/ Prevena wound vac:

KCI – Stacia 907-227-8006



CPM PROTOCOL

- Start on post op day #3
- 3 sessions a day 1 hour each, if unable to do 3 times a day start with 2 sessions a day and move up as tolerable
- Start range of motion 0-50 degrees
- Increase by 10 degrees range of motion every session as tolerated
- Goal is 90% range of motion by 1st/2nd Post op appointment

Call Alaska Medical Solutions at 907-229-1599 for any problems with your CPM or call OPA with medical questions or concerns with your knee at 907-357-2267



Preoperative Period (1-2 weeks before surgery)

Increase Protein Intake: 20-40 g/day (Ideally 2 separate servings of 20 g protein)

Vitamin D3: 5,000 IU/day

Calcium 1,200 mg/day

Vitamin C 1,000 mg/day

Night before surgery

8 PM: drink 32 oz favorite electrolyte sports drink, for example Gatorade (avoid blue and red colored drinks)

Fasting at Midnight

Immediately After Surgery

Popsicles

Throat lozenges

Postoperative Period (1-2 weeks after surgery)

Increase Protein Intake: 20-40 g/day (Ideally 2 separate servings of 20 g protein)

Vitamin D3: 5,000 IU/day

Calcium 1,200 mg/day

Vitamin C 1,000 mg/day

Bowel Medicines/Stool Softeners (Options)

Constipation:

 Docusate 100 mg orally twice daily

 Senna Plus 8.6-50 mg orally twice daily

 Miralax 17 g orally daily

Indigestion:

 Mylanta 200-200-20mg/5 ml 30 ml orally 3 times daily for indigestion

Blood Clot Prevention/Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT) Prophylaxis

Walk after the surgery: Up and walking for every trip to the bathroom, Walk minimum 3 times/day in home 10-15 minutes each session

Medicine prevention:

 - 81 mg Aspirin

 -325 mg Aspirin

-Alternative Agent: _____