



Post Operative Instructions:

Total Knee Arthroplasty

ACTIVITY

- Crutches or a walker may help you balance for the first few days; however, you may put as much weight as comfortable on your leg.
- You may bend and straighten your knee as much as you like.
- Do not engage in prolonged periods of standing or walking over the first 7-10 days following surgery.
- Avoid long periods of sitting (without leg elevated) or long-distance traveling for 2 weeks.

DRESSINGS & INCISIONS

- **Wound Care with Sylke dressing (dry):**
 - **Keep your ACE wrap up for 4 days after surgery. You will need to cover or keep dry during this time**
 - On **day 4**, remove the ACE wrap and gauze dressing. Leave the white tape dressing under this in place for 3 weeks. This dressing is waterproof so you may shower normally when it is on.
 - If your leg has returned to its normal size, you may remove the white compressive TED hose. If swelling persists, it may be helpful to continue wearing it.
 - After **day 21** remove the white tape dressing. You may now shower and allow **water to run over the incision after the dressings are removed**, but **do not soak** the wound in a tub, hot tub, or pool for an additional 1 week. Pat or air-dry the area gently.
- **Wound Care with Prevena:**
 - **Keep your Prevena in place for 7 days after surgery.**
 - On **day 7**, remove the Prevena dressing by gently peeling it from top to bottom (or bottom to top) and replace it with a white Sylke tape dressing. This dressing is waterproof, so you may shower normally when it is on.
 - After **another 14 days** (day 21), remove the white Sylke tape dressing and **leave your incision open to air**. Keep the incision clean and dry.
 - You may shower and allow **water to run over the incision after the dressings are removed**, but **do not soak** the wound in a tub, hot tub, or pool. Pat or air-dry the area gently.
- A **SYLKE dressing** is a white, silk-like strip approximately **1 inch wide** placed over your incision.
 - The SYLKE dressing should be **removed 3–4 weeks after surgery**, unless your surgeon gives you different instructions

PAIN & INFLAMMATION

Ice

- Apply ice wrapped in a dry towel 20 minutes at a time, several times per day for the first week, then as needed.

Compression

- Use an ACE wrap or white stocking to reduce swelling.
- The white stocking should be worn for 5–7 days to help prevent blood clots and reduce knee swelling.

Elevation

- Keep your foot elevated above heart level as much as possible for the first 3–4 days.
- Place a pillow under your calf or foot, not under the knee.

Pain Medications

- Take your prescribed medications as directed.

Tylenol (Acetaminophen)

- First-line for pain.
- Take 1000 mg every 6–8 hours.
- Do not exceed 1000 mg per dose or 4000 mg per day (limit to 3000 mg/day if you have liver issues).
- Do not drink alcohol while taking Tylenol.

Oxycodone

- For moderate to severe breakthrough pain only.
- Use sparingly and wean off as soon as possible.

Common side effects include:

- Nausea: Take with food.
- Drowsiness: Do not drive or operate machinery.
- Itching: Benadryl may help.
- Constipation:
 - Use stool softeners (e.g., Senna-Docusate) or OTC options (Mineral Oil, Milk of Magnesia, etc).
 - Avoid bananas, rice, apples, toast, and yogurt (may worsen constipation).
 - Light walking helps stimulate bowel function.

Refills:

- If you think you will need a refill, you must request it during regular weekday office hours.
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DVT PROPHYLAXIS

- Take Aspirin 162 mg daily as prescribed.
 - This is not for pain—it's to reduce the risk of blood clots (DVT/pulmonary embolism).
 - If you are at higher risk, you may be placed on another anticoagulant instead. If you are already on anticoagulation, you may have a different plan.
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EMERGENCIES

You must have someone stay with you during the first 48 hours after surgery.

Call the clinic or the on-call orthopedist if:

- Drainage soaks the dressing, increases, smells foul, or if incisions become red, warm, or very painful.
 - You develop a fever >101.5°F or chills.
 - You experience leg or calf pain, swelling, or difficulty breathing.
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FOLLOW-UP CARE

- Schedule a follow-up appointment at ~2 weeks postoperatively for a wound check, suture removal, and review of your surgery (if not already scheduled).