



Orthopedic Specialists of Oakland County

Joint Replacement Guide

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Total Joint Replacement

When your joint is severely damaged by arthritis or injury, it may be hard for you to perform simple activities such as walking or climbing stairs. You may even begin to feel pain while you are sitting or lying down. When medications, changing your activity level, and using walking supports are no longer helpful. The time has come for joint replacement surgery. Resurfacing the damaged and worn surfaces of the joint can relieve pain, correct leg deformity and help you resume normal activities.



Now that you have decided to have joint replacement surgery, the following pages will help you understand and prepare for this procedure and put you on the road to a pain free joint.



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Congratulations!

You have made the decision to have Joint Replacement Surgery.

What's Next?

1. You will need to go to your primary care physician to have a check-up and receive medical clearance for surgery.
2. You will need to attend an instructional class to learn more about joint replacement and what your role will be in the surgical/healing process
3. You will need to go to Pre-Admission Testing to have blood work
4. You may have one last appointment with our practice just prior to your surgery to ensure all is in order and also to answer any last minute questions you may have

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Preparing for Surgery



Medical Evaluation

Once the date is set for your total joint replacement surgery, our office asks that you have a complete physical examination by your family physician several weeks before surgery to assess your health and to identify any conditions that could interfere with your surgery. You may need to see a cardiologist or other specialist as well, depending on your medical history.

Pre-Admission Testing

Several tests will be needed to help plan for your surgery. Blood and urine samples, as well as a nasal swab to test for MRSA (a bacteria that some individuals carry) will need to be obtained. Depending on your PCP and/or Cardiologist, an EKG may also be necessary. This testing should be done prior to your pre-operative visit.

Joint Care Class & Pre-Operative Visit

You will attend a joint care class at the hospital and you may visit our office for a pre-operative visit. For knee replacement patients, an innovative treatment called [IOVERA](#) may be performed at your pre-operative visit to help with pain control after surgery.

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Preparing for Surgery



Preparing Your Skin

You will be given anti-septic wipes at your Joint Care Class. You will need to use the night before and the morning of surgery.

Medications

Tell our office about all of the medications that you are taking. We will work with your other doctors to tell you which medications you should stop taking and which you can continue taking prior to surgery.

Social Planning

Although you will be able to walk on crutches or a walker soon after surgery, you will need help for a couple of weeks with such tasks as cooking, shopping, bathing and doing laundry. If you live alone, our office, a social worker or a discharge planner at the hospital can help make arrangements to have someone assist you at home if needed. It can be helpful to make these arrangements before surgery.

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Your Surgery



You will be admitted to the hospital on the day of your surgery. After admission, you will be evaluated by a member of the anesthesia team.

The procedure itself takes approximately 1 to 2 hours.

Many different types of designs and materials are currently used in joint replacement surgery. Our physicians and physician assistants are happy to discuss all of the possible options and their indications.

After the procedure, you will be moved to the recovery room where you will remain for 1 to 2 hours while your recovery from anesthesia is monitored.

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Post Surgery



After you are discharged from the hospital, you may receive in-home physical therapy for two (2) weeks.

Our surgical coordinator will schedule a post-operative appointment for you at our office between 10-14 days post-surgery. You will be given the details of this appointment prior to surgery.

At this appointment, you will receive an outpatient physical therapy prescription. You may be required to complete an additional four (4) weeks of outpatient physical therapy. *Physical therapy is very important in your recovery from joint replacement surgery.*

OSOC is pleased to provide [Physical Therapy](#) services to our patients. Attending physical therapy in one of our OSOC PT locations allows your physician to closely monitor your progress and provide seamless care. Learn more about OSOC PT [here](#).

Clarkston OSOC PT: (248) 246-2277

Bloomfield Hills OSOC PT: (248) 246-2301

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Q. How successful is joint replacement?

A. Both knee and hip joint replacements are recognized as the most successful procedures of modern surgery. Most orthopedic specialists consider it the best way to treat the pain and restore the loss of mobility from severe arthritis. It has allowed hundreds of thousands of people with arthritis to get back on their feet and resume an active lifestyle.

Q. What happens when joint replacements wear out?

A. Today most artificial joints last 15-20 years under normal wear, but they can wear out sooner if subjected to vigorous activity. When a joint wears out, loosens, or develops a problem, it can be resurfaced or replaced in a joint revision.

Q. Is it normal to have numbness near the incision site?

A. It is common to develop some numbness or change in sensation near the incision site. Generally much of the skin sensation will return after 4 to 6 months.

Q. Can I obtain a handicap parking permit for the period of limited mobility after surgery?

A. Yes, our office can provide you with a form to take to the Secretary of State to obtain a temporary parking permit.

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Q. Do I need to be careful of dislocating my hip for the remainder of my life?

A. The greatest risk of dislocation or instability after total hip replacement is within the first 6 weeks. It is always easier to dislocate a replaced hip than your natural hip. Normally, after 6 weeks of restrictions, your surgeon will allow you to return to more normal activities. You will be educated on the safe positions and movements of your hip.

Q. How soon after joint replacement surgery can I drive?

A. Generally, you can begin driving 2-3 weeks after surgery. This will be discussed with you at your first post-operative visit.

Q. I have some warmth and swelling around my hip or knee, is this normal?

A. It is normal to have some swelling and warmth around the operated hip or knee joint in the first few months following surgery. A part of the healing process involves the body creating an increased blood flow to the operated joint, which may cause the joint to feel warm to touch and possibly look swollen. If you notice any redness or experience leg swelling that does not improve with elevating the leg, you should call our office.

Q. Will I ever be able to kneel on my replaced knee?

A. The short answer is yes, you can kneel if you can tolerate it. Although it is okay to kneel on your replaced knee(s), we do not recommend it for prolonged periods of time.

This is just a short list of common questions. Please feel free to contact our office with any questions or concerns that you may have or visit our [website](#) for more information.

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