

# HIP & KNEE

repair, replacement and recovery

## PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET

### **Total Knee Replacement – Occupational Therapy Advice**

How you can help prepare for surgery:

#### **Bring in the following items:**

- A long handled shoehorn.
- Comfortable slip-on shoes and slippers with backs that can be easily put on using a shoehorn.
- A bag which can be worn across you - so that you can carry things while your hands are occupied with walking aids.

#### **Points to consider at home:**

- **Check your furniture heights.** Getting on and off low furniture can be difficult in the first few weeks after surgery. You may need to adapt your chair by adding extra cushions, or use a chair of more suitable height for short-term use. If you are currently having difficulty standing up from a sitting position from your bed, consider using a bed of a more suitable height.
- **Personal care.** It may be useful to have a stool or chair next to the basin so you can sit down to have a strip wash in the short term. **The wound must be kept dry until healed.**
- **Shower cubicle.** Check the height of your shower tray. You will need to use a balancing hand on the wall or hold the side of the shower frame to help you to step into the cubicle. Practice stepping into the shower tray with the unaffected leg and stepping out with the operated leg prior to admission.
- **Over bath shower.**
  - Method 1.** Position a stool or armless chair alongside the bath (preferably at the same height or higher than your bath). When sitting on the stool you should be able to swing your legs over the side of the bath and by pushing from the bath side or rails stand up in order to shower.
  - Method 2.** Stand parallel to the side of the bath with the operated leg against the bath. Extend the operated leg behind the body and reach down to take hold of both rims of the bath. Lift the extended leg over the edge of the bath. When placing the

foot leave adequate space for both to be positioned side by side. Stand upright to shower. To get out of the bath repeat this technique being sure to lift the operated leg out of the bath first.

- **Bathing.** If you were bathing independently immediately before your operation, you may restart **once your wound is completely healed.**
- **Household tasks.** Think about where you might get help with changing of bed linen, laundry, vacuuming and shopping whilst you are walking with walking aids. Perhaps family, friends or neighbours can help, or some neighbourhoods have voluntary agencies who may assist you. But ask now; don't leave it until you go home after your operation.
- **Caring for your pet.** Feeding bowls will be reached more easily if they are positioned on a box or biscuit tin. Please keep pets away from your knee wound for at least the first 2-3 weeks.
- **Car user as a passenger following surgery.** Ask the driver to move the front passenger seat back as far as possible. Turn with your walking aids until the back of your legs are touching the car, then hand your walking aids to the driver. Lower yourself down onto the car seat, holding onto the doorframe if necessary. Slide your bottom across the passenger seat towards the handbrake then bring in your legs. Doing it this way gives you more room, and avoids forcing your newly operated knee into an uncomfortable bend.

#### Points to consider in the kitchen:

1. Stock up the freezer with basic supplies such as ready-made meals, milk and bread. Stock up cupboards with tinned and packet foods.
2. If you are alone during the day consider where you can eat (perhaps in the kitchen using a chair or stool next to the work surface) as you will be unable to carry plated meals whilst walking with walking aids. Consider buying a flask or insulated beaker for hot drinks or soup, which can be carried in a neck or shoulder bag.
3. Arrange commonly used items in accessible groups to avoid excessive reaching, bending or walking about.
  - Position your kettle close to the sink and fill using a plastic jug. Move tea, coffee, sugar, mugs and cutlery near by.
  - Rearrange your fridge freezer with regularly used items on the top shelf for easy access. Avoid large containers of milk.
4. Use one crutch in the kitchen and take support through the other arm by placing your hand on the worktop. While standing still, move the item forward, then use the crutch and work surface as support to walk towards it.

5. To reach down into low cupboards, or your fridge or freezer, extend your operated leg out behind you and take your weight through your good leg. Place your crutch in the door hinge or onto the bench to prevent it falling. Keep one hand on the work surface for support.
6. When reaching into high cupboards, take support from the surface in front of you. Ensure your feet are apart to provide a stable posture and stand in front of the object you are lifting down (do not lean over to the side).
7. Sit down where possible e.g. to do ironing or prepare vegetables.

The Occupational Therapy team will be available on the ward to discuss any particular concerns relating to everyday activities. If necessary you can also practice particular activities in our assessment flat.

If you have any questions or need advice or information, then phone the Orthopaedic Ward, Orthopaedic Education and Follow Up Clinic or the Occupational Therapy department and they will do their best to help.

**[Orthopaedic Education and Follow Up Clinic - 01256 313580](#)**

**[Orthopaedic Ward D1 - 01256 313681](#)**

**[Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy - 01256 313205](#)**