FOR PATIENTS & FAMILIES · KNEE REPLACEMENT

KG

Before the knee replacement, *a checklist.*

What to ask the surgeon's office, what to set up at home, a log for the knee's bend, and the signs that need a call.

ASK BEFORE SURGERY

- ☐ Is the plan same-day surgery or a hospital stay, and will the stay be inpatient or outpatient?
- ☐ Will a nerve block be used for pain, and how long might the leg be weak?
- ☐ How far should the knee bend at 2, 4 and 6 weeks, and when should I call if it is behind?
- ☐ Will therapy be home visits, outpatient, or a home program? Is a CPM machine part of the plan?
- ☐ Are there knee precautions, or limits on putting weight on the leg?
- ☐ What is the plan to prevent blood clots, and for how long?
- ☐ Who is the contact for problems at night or on a weekend?

SET UP THE HOME

- ☐ Room to move with a walker or crutches, and everyday things within reach.
- ☐ A bedroom downstairs for a while, if stairs are hard.
- ☐ Throw rugs removed; electrical cords fastened out of the way.
- ☐ A firm chair with a higher seat and a footstool.
- ☐ A shower chair, a grab bar and a raised toilet seat.
- ☐ Help lined up for the first weeks at home.

THE BEND, WEEK BY WEEK

WEEK	BENDS TO	STRAIGHTENS TO
2		
4		
6		
12		

Ask the therapist for both numbers, in degrees. One trial moved home-exercise patients to outpatient therapy below 70° at 2 weeks or 90° at 4: its thresholds, not a rule for everyone. A stiff knee is best treated within about 3 months.

AFTER SURGERY: ACT RIGHT AWAY

Possible clot in the leg: increasing calf pain, tenderness or redness above or below the knee, or new or increasing swelling in the calf, ankle and foot.	Call the surgeon right away.
Possible clot in the lung: sudden shortness of breath, sudden chest pain, or chest pain in one spot with coughing.	Call 911.
Possible infection: a persistent fever over 100°F taken by mouth, chills, increasing redness, tenderness or swelling of the wound, drainage, or knee pain increasing with activity and at rest.	Call the surgeon right away.
A fall.	Call the surgeon's office right away; go to an emergency department if you cannot put weight on the leg.

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Scan or visit · kevineugenegroh.com/rehab/rehab-after-knee-replacement/

General education, not medical advice. It does not create a patient–provider relationship. Range-of-motion goals, precautions and activity rules differ between surgeons and patients: follow your own surgical team's instructions. Home set-up and warning signs follow the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons' patient guidance; full sources are on the web page. Updated Nov 2026.