



Newport Hospital

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Total Knee Arthroplasty

Moving safely after surgery

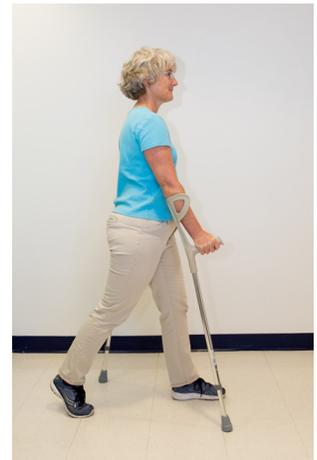
Walking

Goal: Placing each foot in front of the other as naturally as possible.

1. Using either a walker or forearm crutches, step forward with the surgical leg at the same time you move the device.
2. When using forearm crutches, move each crutch in time with the opposite leg. The crutch on the right side moves forward as you step with the left leg, and so on.

Depending on your comfort level, you may need to place the device first and then advance the surgical leg.

3. Support your body weight through your arms and place weight on your surgical leg to tolerance.
4. Pick up your non-surgical leg and place it in front of your surgical leg.
5. Repeat the process.



Getting in and out of bed

1. Sit down on the bed in the same manner as you would sit in a chair (see next page), allowing your surgical knee to bend. Remember to remove your forearm from the crutch and hold only the handle.
2. Slide your buttocks backward until your knees are on the bed.
3. Pivot on your buttocks as you lift your legs onto the bed.

For comfort: lead with your good leg. Initially, you may need to assist the surgical leg with your hand.

To get out of bed, reverse the procedure.



Lying down

When lying on your side, try placing a pillow between your legs for comfort. After surgery, it is fine to lie on either side, or on your back if you are comfortable.

Note: When lying on your back, do not put a pillow directly beneath your surgical knee as it may cause the knee to stiffen in a bent position.



Sitting down

1. Feel for the chair or bed with the back of your legs.
2. Reach for the armrests with one hand. The other hand should be on the handle of the crutch, with forearm free.
3. Slowly lower yourself down, allowing your surgical knee to bend as much as tolerated. *For comfort: You may keep your surgical leg forward if you feel pain.*

Note: Try to choose a firm, straight-backed chair with arm rests. For comfort: sit in chairs higher than knee height. *You may want to avoid sitting on soft chairs, rocking chairs, sofas or stools, as they can make getting up difficult.*





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Standing

1. Slide your buttocks to the edge of the chair, so that your feet are flat on the floor.
2. Bend both of your knees to get your feet under you, ready to hold your body weight.
For comfort: you may step forward with your surgical leg if bending the knee is too difficult.
3. Before standing up, place one hand on your walker or crutch and one hand on your chair armrest.
4. Push with your legs and arms to rise. Only hold handle of crutch when getting up.
5. Once balanced, transfer your other hand onto the walker or other crutch.



Managing Stairs

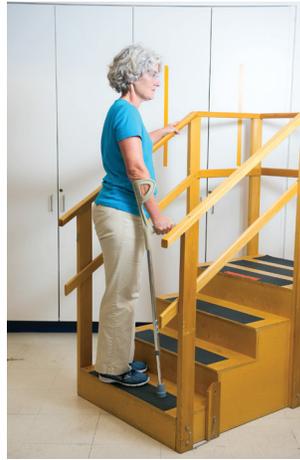
A handrail will make things easier and safer for you. Simply place one hand on the railing, and hold both crutches on the other side of your body.

If no handrail is available, use one crutch on each side of your body. Follow the same sequence as below.

As your knee range of motion and strength improves, you will eventually be able to resume “normal” stair climbing.

To go up the stairs: (picture shows surgical leg on the right)

1. If you have a handrail, keep the cane/crutches on the same side as the surgical leg.
2. Start close to the bottom step.
3. Step up to the first step with the non-surgical leg first, using hand support as needed.
4. Step up to the same step with the surgical leg and crutches, putting weight on your surgical leg as tolerated.



To go down the stairs: (picture shows surgical leg on the right)

1. Start at the edge of the step.
2. Bring the cane/crutches and then your surgical leg down to the next step.
3. Use your upper body strength to support your weight and keep your balance.
4. Step down to the same step with the non-surgical leg, putting only the advised amount of weight through your surgical leg as tolerated.

Note: Check your balance each time before proceeding to the next step.



Note: When climbing stairs using a railing and one crutch, you can carry both crutches with you by holding the extra crutch horizontally and wrapping your hand around both. If a caregiver is present, he or she can carry the extra crutch, if you prefer.



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Getting in and out of the shower or tub

Depending on your home set up, it is recommended that you obtain a shower bench or a chair to place inside the bathing area, or over the tub threshold (a bench works for this purpose). Grab bars are also recommended.

DO NOT: Sit on the bottom of the tub.

DO: Place a non-skid mat inside and outside shower. Always check for water on the floor after your shower is complete.

DO: Have someone help you when you bathe for the first time.

1. Back up to the seat/ tub threshold using your walker or crutches.
2. Place a hand on the seat back or sitting surface and slowly lower yourself down with one hand still on your walker or crutches.

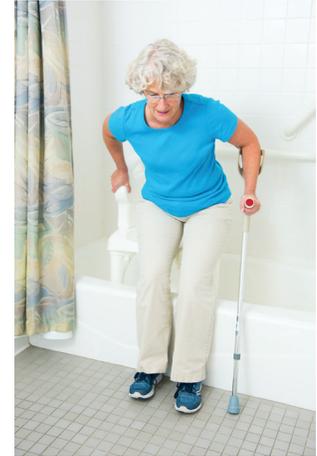
For comfort: you may want to have the surgical leg out in front a little, but still allow the knee to bend as you lower yourself.

3. Once seated, place your legs inside the bathing area by lifting them independently, or using your hands to assist you as needed.

Getting Out

1. Wrap a towel around you while seated.
2. Turn on the chair and lift legs out of the tub or over the threshold, using your hands to assist as needed.
3. Place one hand on the walker or crutch and one hand on the sitting surface, with knees bent as comfortable.
4. Push with legs and arms to stand.

For safety: Using a grab bar will be very helpful.



Getting into a car

1. Move the seat back as far as it goes and recline it slightly. For comfort: reclining the back of your seat will give you more room when bringing your legs into the car.
2. Back up close to the seat and place one hand on the back of the seat and one hand on the dashboard for support.
3. Sit down slowly, keeping both of your feet on the ground, allowing your knees to bend as tolerated.
4. Slide back on the seat as far as you can go.
5. Swing your legs in, bending your knee to a comfortable position.

Tips: Adding a firm cushion to the seat will help you get in and out of the car more easily. You can also put a plastic bag on the seat to make it easier to slide.

