

Total Joint Class Patient FAQs

Q: I take a blood thinner every day. When am I supposed to stop taking it before surgery?

A: During your Preadmission Testing appointment, you will be instructed exactly which medications to stop before surgery and when.

Q: Am I supposed to take my regular medicines on the day of surgery?

A: At your Preadmission Testing appointment at the hospital, you will be instructed exactly which medications to take and which medicines not to take on the day of surgery.

Q: My doctor said I'm getting home health. Do I set that up?

A: No. If your plan is home health, the case manager at the hospital will set that up for you.

Q: What kind of implant will be in my joint replacement?

A: Ask your surgeon for the specific details.

Q: Why can't I go to a rehab facility after the hospital?

A: We rarely need to send patients to rehab. Most patients do too well to qualify for rehab. It's best to go home to your own environment for recovery.

Q: If my surgeon and I decide that rehab may be a good discharge plan for me, do I need to have a back-up discharge plan?

A: Yes. You should have a discharge back up plan of going home. We are seeing more and more insurance plans denying authorization for patients going to rehab after joint replacement surgeries. It is not a guarantee that your insurance company will pay for rehab.

Q: How many days after surgery do I start outpatient therapy?

A: Usually 3-4 days after your surgery date. You will receive specific instructions from your surgeon/PA.

Q: What do they do at the hospital preop appointment?

A: You will complete the registration process for the hospital, meet with a nurse to review your medical history and medications, meet with an anesthesiologist, receive specific preop instructions from the nurse, and possibly have blood work done.

Q: I have a polar care ice machine. Can I bring that to the hospital?

A: Only if your surgeon/PA has instructed you to bring it; otherwise, we will use ice packs in the hospital and then you can use your polar care once you get home if you would like.

Q: What blood thinner will I be taking and for how long?

A: It depends on the patient and it depends on the surgeon. Your surgeon will choose which medication they feel is best for you. Follow your surgeon's instructions. You may be taking the blood thinner for only 2 weeks, or maybe up to 6 weeks -- it just depends.

Q: When can I drive?

A: Usually 4-6 weeks after surgery for your right leg. It may be sooner with your left leg if you are doing well. Your Physical Therapist (PT) and surgeon can help you determine when you're ready. You must be off all narcotic pain medications.