

Total knee replacement

Before surgery exercise program

You may have discovered you have been less active because of your knee joint discomfort. When muscles are not used, they become weak and do not perform well in supporting and moving your body. Having your knee surgery will correct the joint problem, but you will need a regular exercise program to strengthen and stretch your muscles to properly support your new joint.

Beginning an exercise program before surgery can greatly help your recovery.





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There are several exercises listed below for you to work on before your surgery. Because everyone responds to exercise differently, you need to be the judge of how much exercise you can do each day. If an exercise causes an increase in discomfort, stop doing that exercise. You should try to exercise one to two times a day, every day, before surgery. Work up to doing 10 to 20 repetitions of each exercise. It may be helpful to do these exercises on both legs.

For the most comfort, do the exercises lying down. Your bed is an excellent place to do your exercises.

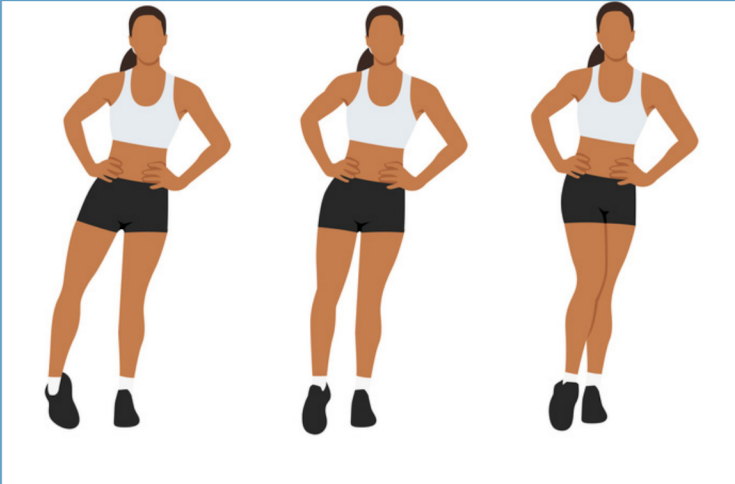


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Knee exercises – before surgery



Ankle pumps and circles

Pump your feet up and down by pulling your feet up toward you, then pushing your feet down away from you. Next, rotate your feet clockwise and counterclockwise.



Thigh squeezes (quadriceps sets)

Tighten the muscles on the top of your thigh by pushing the back of your knee down into the bed. Hold for 5 seconds and relax.





Heel slides (hip and knee flexion)

Bend your surgical hip and knee by sliding your heel up toward your buttocks while keeping your heel on the bed. Slide your heel back down to the starting position and relax. Keep your kneecap pointed up toward the ceiling during the exercise. You may want to use a plastic bag under your heel to help it slide easier.



Leg slides (abduction/adduction)

Slide your surgical leg out to the side, keeping your kneecap pointed up toward the ceiling. Slide your leg back to the starting position. You may want to use a plastic bag under your heel to help it slide easier.





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Lying kicks (short arc quadriceps)

Lie on your back with a rolled-up blanket or towel (at least 6 inches in diameter) under the knee of your surgical leg. Straighten your surgical leg. Hold for 5 seconds. Slowly lower your leg down and relax. The back of your knee should stay in contact with the blanket or towel during the exercise.



Straight leg raises

Bend your other leg with your foot flat on the bed. Raise your surgical leg up (about 12 inches), keeping your knee straight. Also bend your ankle up pulling your toes toward you. Work up to holding for 5 seconds. Slowly lower your leg down and relax.



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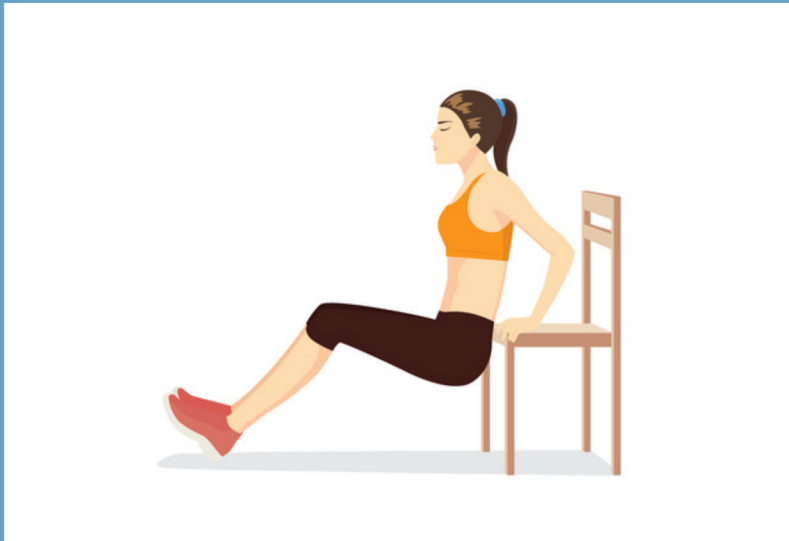


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Bed mobility exercise

Lie flat on your back. Come up on both elbows. Straighten your arms out behind you and come to a sitting position. Lower yourself down onto your elbows again, then down to lying flat.



Chair pushups

Sit on a sturdy chair with arms. Hold the arms of the chair. Push down on the chair arms, straightening your elbows so you raise your buttocks a few inches off the seat of the chair. Work up to holding for 5 seconds. Lower yourself slowly back into the chair. If your arms are weak, use your legs to help raise your buttocks off the seat of the chair.





Knee bending stretch (sitting knee flexion)

Sit toward the front of a sturdy chair. Slowly slide your foot back and forth 10 times as a warmup. Then slide your foot back inch-by-inch, bending your knee as much as you can. You can use your hands to help. Hold for 30 seconds. (Your heel can lift up from the floor). Return to the starting position and relax. Repeat 3 times slowly.



Knee straightening stretch (sitting knee extension)

Sit on a sturdy chair with your lower leg up on another chair, or a footstool, in front of you. You should feel a stretch on the back of your knee. You can do thigh squeezes or add a towel roll under your ankle to increase the stretch. Do this stretch for 5 to 10 minutes as you are able. This exercise can also be done lying in bed.

