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# **KNEE REPLACEMENT SURGERY:**

# **HOME EXERCISE PROGRAM**

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# HOW TO: POSITION YOUR KNEE AFTER YOUR SURGERY

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## CHANGE YOUR POSITION OFTEN

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Do not sit in a chair with your feet down for more than 30-60 minutes at a time. If possible, after about an hour, prop your leg up onto a stool or raise the foot rest of a recliner. This will prevent excessive swelling or joint stiffness that may cause more pain or make walking difficult.



## KEEP YOUR KNEE STRAIGHT WHILE SLEEPING

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Do not place a pillow or other items under your knee - this includes while sleeping. This can lead to what is called a contracture, meaning your new joint can get stuck in the bent position, making walking and other mobility extremely difficult.



# IMPORTANT EXERCISES TO DO BEGINNING THE FIRST DAY AFTER SURGERY

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The goals of this phase are to begin to regain movement of your knee on your surgical side(s), begin strengthening the supporting muscles, and start a program to improve your endurance and to resume 'light' activities of daily living.

## ENDURANCE ACTIVITY

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Walk at a light-to-moderate pace after your surgery to work on your walking abilities. It is very important to use your walker early after your surgery so that you do not put your full weight through the new joint as this can be very painful. When starting a walking program, you can do as short as 1-2 minutes at a time multiple times a day, such as during commercial breaks while watching television. Gradually increase the amount you do at once as you can tolerate.

## STRENGTHENING EXERCISES

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Do each exercise slowly and in a controlled manner. You may feel some mild discomfort with some of them, but they should not be painful. Movement should feel easier each day as you recover. If in doubt, contact your surgeon or physical therapist. All of these exercises are shown and explained over the next few pages. Perform both sets of exercises two to three times a day, doing each exercise 15 times, unless otherwise directed by your physical therapist or doctor.

# EXERCISES TO DO ON YOUR BED

COMPLETE 15 REPETITIONS, 2-3 TIMES PER DAY



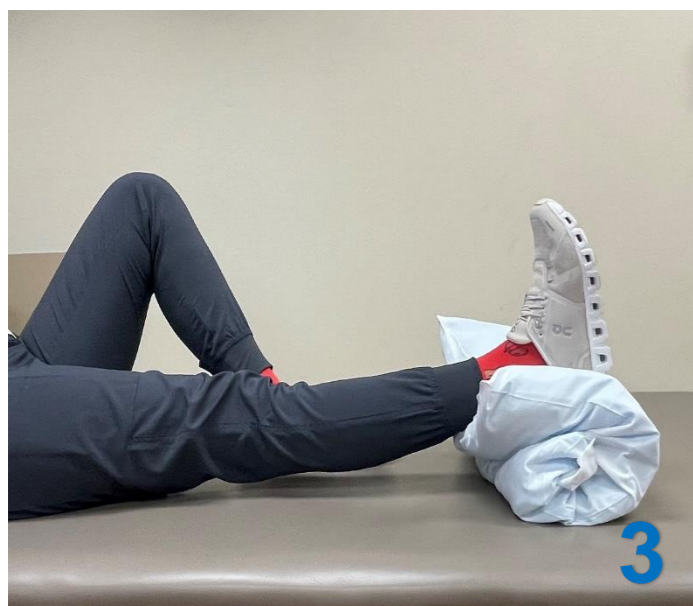
## 1 ANKLE PUMPS

Slowly pull your foot back toward you, and then point your foot away from you. Repeat.



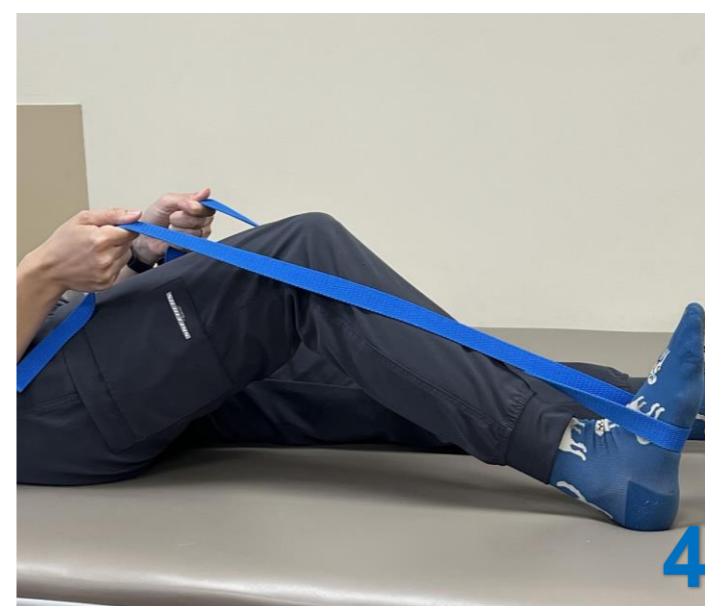
## 2 QUAD SETS

This exercise is not a lot of movement. Push your knee down into the bed, straightening your knee out as much as possible. You will feel the quad muscle activate. Hold for 2-3 seconds. Relax the muscle and repeat.



## 3 KNEE EXTENSION STRETCH

Sitting in a comfortable chair, prop surgery foot on a chair or stool. You can also use a recliner with a towel rolled under ankle so that calf is supported. Apply an ice pack on top of the knee. Hold position for 20 minutes.



## 4 HEEL SLIDES

You may use a strap to assist your leg. Slide your heel on the bed towards your buttocks while slowly bending your knee. Bend the knee as much as you can comfortably. Hold for 2-3 seconds before slowly straightening your knee back to the start position.

# EXERCISES TO DO ON YOUR BED (continued)

COMPLETE 15 REPETITIONS, 2-3 TIMES PER DAY



## 5 GLUTE SETS

This exercise is not a lot of movement. Squeeze your buttocks together and hold for 2-3 seconds. Relax the muscles and repeat.



## 6 LEG KICKS

Place a small bolster or pillow under your knee. Slowly kick your foot up so that your knee is as straight as possible. Hold for 2-3 seconds. Slowly lower your foot back onto the bed before repeating.



## 7 WINDSHIELD WIPERS

Slowly slide your leg out to the side, away from your other leg, as shown in the top picture.



Then slide your leg slowly back to the start position. This exercise mimics making a snow angel.



## 8 STRAIGHT LEG RAISE

Straighten your knee out completely, pull your toes back towards your nose. Slowly lift your leg off of the bed, making sure the knee stays completely straight. Slowly lower the leg back onto the bed.

TIP: Bend your opposite leg and plant your foot to protect your back.

# EXERCISES TO DO IN A CHAIR

COMPLETE 15 REPETITIONS, 2-3 TIMES PER DAY



## 1 ANKLE PUMPS

Lift your toes up from the floor and slowly return them back to the floor. Repeat.



## 2 LEG KICKS

Slowly kick your foot up so that your knee straightens out as much as possible. Hold for 2-3 seconds before slowly returning your foot to the floor.



## 3 MARCHES

Slowly lift your knee up as if you are marching, then slowly return your foot to the floor. Repeat.



## 4 KNEE BENDS

Scout to the edge of your chair. Put a towel or pillow case under your foot. Slowly slide your foot back so that you bend your knee as much as you can tolerate. Hold for 2-3 seconds before sliding your foot forward.

# EXERCISES TO DO IN A CHAIR

COMPLETE 15 REPETITIONS, 2-3 TIMES PER DAY



## 5 LEG CURLS

Put the exercise band behind your ankle. Slowly bend your knee and pull your foot back toward you. Hold for 2-3 seconds before slowly bringing your leg forward.



## 6 HIP OPENING

Place the exercise band around your thighs while your feet and knees are touching. Slowly bring your knees apart, hold for 2-3 seconds before bringing your knees back together.

TIP: Do not place the band over your incision.



## 7 KNEE SQUEEZES

Place a pillow between your knees. Squeeze the pillow by pushing your knees together. Hold for 2-3 seconds and relax.



## **TIPS FOR PAINLESS MOVEMENT**

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- ✓ **ALWAYS PLACE YOUR SURGICAL LEG FORWARD BEFORE YOU SIT OR STAND**
- ✓ **REMEMBER THE PHRASE...  
“UP WITH THE GOOD AND DOWN WITH THE BAD” WHEN DOING STEPS**
- ✓ **TAKE BREAKS OFTEN AND ALLOW YOURSELF EXTRA TIME TO DO YOUR ACTIVITIES OF DAILY LIVING**



# HOW TO: GET IN AND OUT OF A CHAIR

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- 1. APPROACH A CHAIR WITH ARM RESTS WITH YOUR WALKER, BACKING UP TO THE CHAIR UNTIL YOU CAN FEEL THE CHAIR BEHIND YOUR LEGS**

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- 2. PLACE YOUR SURGICAL LEG FORWARD AS SHOWN IN THE SECOND IMAGE TO MINIMIZE PAIN WITH SITTING**

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- 3. REACH BACK FOR THE ARMRESTS OF THE CHAIR AND SLOWLY SIT DOWN**

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- 4. TO STAND UP, PUT YOUR SURGICAL LEG FORWARD AND PUSH UP FROM THE ARMRESTS OF THE CHAIR WITH BOTH HANDS**

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# HOW TO: GET IN A CAR



- 1. SET THE CAR SEAT AS FAR BACK AS POSSIBLE FOR ADEQUATE LEG ROOM AND RECLINE THE SEAT BACK FOR ADDITIONAL ROOM**

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- 2. APPROACH THE PASSENGER SIDE OF THE CAR WITH YOUR WALKER, BACKING UP UNTIL YOU CAN FEEL THE CAR BEHIND YOUR LEGS**

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- 3. PLACE YOUR SURGICAL LEG FORWARD TO MINIMIZE PAIN WITH SITTING**

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- 4. REACH BACK FOR THE TOP OF THE SEAT WITH YOUR RIGHT HAND AND THE DOOR/DOOR HANDLE WITH YOUR LEFT BEFORE SLOWLY SITTING DOWN**

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- 5. SCOOT YOUR BOTTOM BACK ONTO THE SEAT AS FAR AS YOU CAN**

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- 6. USE YOUR LEG STRAP TO ASSIST YOUR SURGICAL LEG INTO THE CAR**

# HOW TO: GO UP ONE STEP WITH A WALKER



**1. APPROACH THE STEP WITH YOUR WALKER, GETTING CLOSE TO THE STEP**

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**2. PLACE THE WALKER ONTO THE STEP**

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**3. STEP UP WITH YOUR "GOOD" LEG - THIS WILL AVOID PAIN WITH STEP**

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**4. THEN STEP UP WITH YOUR "BAD" LEG**

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# HOW TO: GO DOWN ONE STEP WITH A WALKER



- 1. APPROACH THE EDGE OF THE STEP WITH YOUR WALKER, GETTING CLOSE TO THE EDGE**

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- 2. PLACE THE WALKER DOWN FIRST**

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- 3. STEP DOWN WITH THE "BAD" LEG FIRST - THIS WILL AVOID PAIN AND BENDING OF THE SURGICAL LEG**

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- 4. NEXT PUT WEIGHT THROUGH YOUR ARMS ON THE WALKER AND STEP DOWN WITH THE "GOOD" LEG**

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# HOW TO: DO STEPS WITH TWO HAND RAILS

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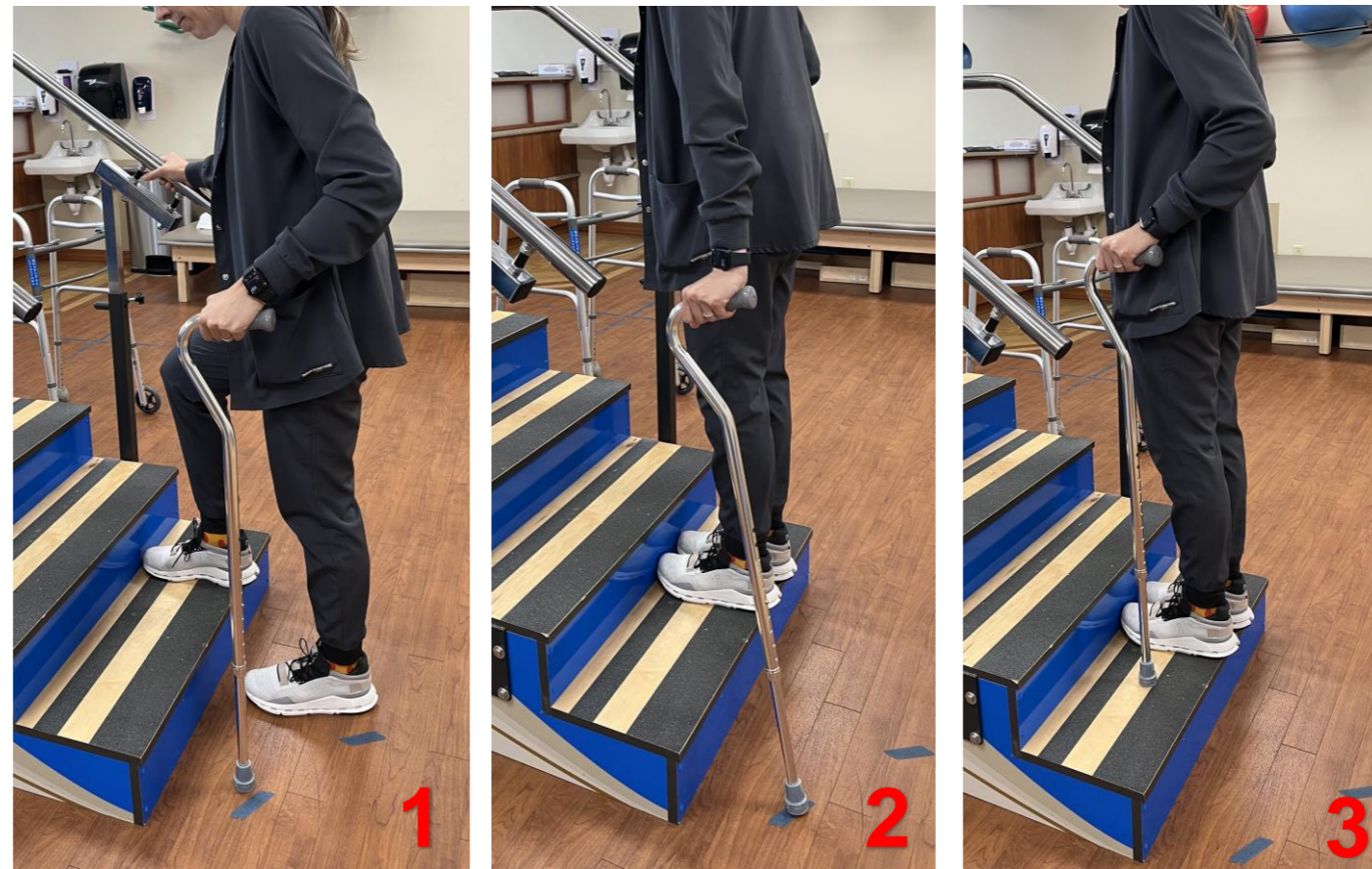


1. PUT BOTH HANDS ON THE HAND RAILS
2. STEP UP WITH THE “GOOD” LEG FIRST
3. THEN STEP WITH THE “BAD” LEG ONTO THE SAME STEP
4. REPEAT FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE STEPS



1. PUT BOTH HANDS ON THE HAND RAILS
2. STEP DOWN WITH THE “BAD” LEG FIRST
3. THEN STEP WITH THE “GOOD” LEG ONTO THE SAME STEP
4. REPEAT FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE STEPS

# HOW TO: GO UP STEPS WITH ONE HAND RAIL



1. PLACE YOUR HAND ON THE HANDRAIL THAT IS AVAILABLE AND USE A CANE IN YOUR OTHER HAND. KEEP THE CANE ON THE GROUND NEXT TO YOUR FEET.
2. STEP UP WITH “GOOD” LEG FIRST
3. THEN STEP UP WITH “BAD” LEG ONTO THE SAME STEP
4. FINALLY, BRING THE CANE ONTO THE SAME STEP

# HOW TO: GO DOWN STEPS WITH ONE HAND RAIL

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- 1. PLACE YOUR HAND ON THE HANDRAIL THAT IS AVAILABLE AND USE A CANE IN YOUR OTHER HAND. KEEP THE CANE ON THE GROUND NEXT TO YOUR FEET.**

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- 2. PLACE THE CANE DOWN ONTO THE NEXT STEP FIRST**

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- 3. THEN STEP DOWN WITH “BAD” LEG**

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- 4. FINALLY, STEP DOWN WITH YOUR “GOOD” LEG ONTO THE SAME STEP AS THE CANE AND YOUR SURGICAL LEG**

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# HOW TO: GET INTO BED

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- 1. SITTING ON THE SIDE OF THE BED, HOOK THE FOOT OF YOUR “BAD” LEG WITH YOUR STRAP**

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- 2. A. IF YOU ARE GETTING INTO THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE BED (PICTURED ABOVE) SCOOT YOUR LEFT HIP BACKWARDS SO THAT THE LEFT LEG IS POSITIONED TO EASILY LIFT ONTO THE BED**  
**B. IF YOU ARE GETTING INTO THE LEFT SIDE OF THE BED, SCOOT YOUR RIGHT HIP BACKWARDS SO THAT THE RIGHT LEG IS POSITIONED TO EASILY LIFT ONTO THE BED**

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- 3. USE THE STRAP TO HELP LIFT YOUR LEG ONTO THE BED AND TO HELP MOVE THE LEG SIDeways SO THAT YOU ARE CENTERED ON THE MATTRESS**

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