PRITCHARD ORTHOPAEDICS

MR MICHAEL PRITCHARD
BMedSci, MBBS (Hons) FRACS
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEON

Wellington Grange - St Johns Campus
30 Cascade Road, South Hobart 7004
P: 03 6223 7122 F: 03 6223 7133
E: reception@pritchardorthopaedics.com.au
www.pritchardorthopaedics.com.au

| Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) - Patient handout for joint replacement surgery | |
|---|---|
| **How much can I move my leg on the night of surgery?** | If you have had your **HIP** replaced you are encouraged to gently bend your knee in the immediate post-operative period whilst your local anaesthetic is working. For your comfort you will be able to rest your operated hip with the support of a pillow.<br><br>Your surgeon recommends that you bend your knee up and down at least twice every hour. This encourages blood flow in the area to avoid stiffness the morning following your surgery. |
| | If you have had your **KNEE** replaced we encourage bending your knee at least twice every hour.<br>• The bandages and dressings will restrict the amount of movement that can be achieved.<br>• The morning after your surgery your nurse will assist you to sit with your legs over the edge of the bed to achieve a 90 degree bend.<br>• The physiotherapist/nurses will help you day one and will assist you to walk with a frame or crutches and begin exercises. |
| **How will I manage my pain?** | **Speak to your anaesthetist at the pre- assessment appointment regarding your options.**<br>• Panadol or Panadol Osteo is a very good pain relief drug if taken on a regular basis.<br>• Your doctor will also ensure that there are stronger pain relief medications available if you require.<br>Pain interferes with mobility and wound healing, it is important that your pain is controlled, (not pain free) and that you are comfortable.<br>• Pain relieving medication works best if taken before the pain becomes too severe and is best taken regularly.<br>• Some pain relief medication may make you feel light headed and nauseated.<br>If this happens it is important to be careful when bending over, for example to put on your shoes or pants or emerging from a hot shower as **you can be at risk of fainting**.<br><br>If these symptoms continue, consult your nurse or doctor about your pain relieving medication.<br>• Regular ice to your wound area also helps to reduce pain and swelling. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **How will I manage my pain? cont...** | **Arnica Cream**<br>• Assists with pain caused by bruising.<br>• **Massage at least 3 times a day**.<br>• Into the whole thigh to the knee following **hip replacement**<br>• From the top of the thigh, back of the knee and calf for **knee replacement** |
| **How do I prevent getting a blood clot post surgery? What medication will I be given?** | You will be commenced on Xarelto (Rivaroxiban)/Aspirin post operatively. You will be given a script on discharge to continue this medication for 2-4 weeks.<br><br>**Pain relief** – If required, you will be given strong medication on discharge for pain relief. Contact your GP if you require a repeat script, or an additional appointment to see Mr Pritchard regarding your pain. |
| **What happens with my dressings / wound?** | **HIP REPLACEMENT**<br>• Your wound will be glued externally with internal sutures and does not require any treatment.<br>• It will be covered with a water resistant dressing<br>• After your shower, pat the wound dressing dry with a clean towel.<br>• **REMOVE water resistant DRESSING 10-12 DAYS AFTER SURGERY**. NO need to apply a new dressing. If concerned, Email a photo of the wound site for Mr Pritchard to check.<br>• You will see Mr Prtichard 6 weeks after surgery (appt made pre-op)<br>**KNEE REPLACEMENT**<br>• You will have staples in the knee with a water resistant dressing<br>• **12-14 days post surgery, appointment with Mr Pritchard for staples to be removed. DO NOT remove dressing prior to this.**<br>**Appointments for follow up after surgery are given at the time of booking. Please read the 'Confirmation of Surgery' page in your pack.** |
| **How much exercise should I do?** | If your **hip** operation is performed early in the day the nurse will assist you to get up in the evening to have a short walk to the bathroom.<br>If you have had a **knee** replacement and you are feeling comfortable, you may get up for the first time on the day of your surgery.<br>• Your nurse and/or physiotherapist will help you start to mobilise.<br>• You will complete some exercises and learn to walk with a mobility aid.<br>The Nurses and the Physiotherapist will progress your exercises and monitor your movement and strength throughout your stay. It is expected that you are able to complete the exercises by yourself.<br><br>When you are walking well, your Nurse and / or the Physiotherapist will advise when to get up and walk by yourself throughout the day.<br>• We aim for three small walks and three sets of exercises daily by the time you discharge from hospital.<br>**We recommend you continue this daily exercise following discharge.** |

| | |
|---|---|
| **During your first week at home** | • Commence walking outside in the garden or to the letter box.<br>• Gradually increase your level of activity as you feel able.<br>• Always exercise with respect to pain.<br>Your Physiotherapist will also discuss any equipment you may require on discharge.<br>Not all patients require follow-up Physiotherapy after they have been discharged home from hospital.<br><br>If you are someone who would benefit from more input, your Surgeon/Physiotherapist can make recommendations as to services available. |
| **After your hip operation – It is normal to experience** | • Bruising<br>• Tender to touch<br>• Numbness down the thigh.<br>The lateral cutaneous nerve of thigh is a skin sensation nerve and can be compressed during retraction of muscles for your operation.<br>Nerves take 1-2 years to maximally to recover. Sometimes you may have a numb area which will not improve.<br><br>• Hair loss (from the Anaesthetic) |
| **What happens if I become constipated?** | There are many factors that can contribute to constipation following surgery:<br><br>Decreased fluid intake, change in diet, diet low in fibre, pain medication, anaesthetic, decreased mobility to name a few. **Constipation may delay your discharge** from hospital and it will impact on your wellness.<br>• Your nurse will provide you with medication to assist with your bowels commencing on day one.<br>• The bowel regime you commenced prior to surgery should be continued in conjunction to the medication given by the nurse (eg Metamucil/ Benefibre/Movicol).<br>It is also important that you increase you fluid intake, and take advantage of menu options such as prunes, prune juice and fresh fruit to assist with your bowels. |
| **How much Rest and Elevation is recommended?** | While in hospital it is important that you rest with your leg elevated and your foot pumps on for at least 2-3 hours each afternoon.<br>It is recommended that you wear your foot pumps at all times when you are in bed until you are discharged.<br>We understand that most patients are reluctant to call the nurse to attach and unattach the pumps **but** they are recommended to **decrease your risk of developing a clot** in your leg and also to **reduce swelling in your leg**.<br>When you go home it is **important that you continue the rest period of 2-3 hours in the afternoon.**<br>• elevate your leg on your bed with the aid of 2-3 pillows<br>• while resting flex your foot up and down at least 10-15 times every 15 minutes. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **How long do I need to use my crutches for?** | **CRUTCHES are required post surgery. Please bring to hospital on the day of your surgery.**<br>It is important to use two crutches **for two weeks post your surgery**<br>**After two weeks**<br>• If you are walking normally and feel confident you can **decrease to one crutch** for a further two weeks.<br><br>**You will therefore be on crutches for total of four weeks.**<br><br>It is important that you use your crutches for the full four weeks to protect the new joint while new bone is being made and healing is taking place.<br><br>If you have had your **knee replaced** you can use one or two crutches until you feel comfortable to walk without them. |
| **How soon after my surgery can I drive?** | This depends firstly on which leg you have had operated.<br><br>If you have had your **LEFT hip or knee replaced and you drive an automatic car,** you can drive:<br>• once you can get in and out of the car safely<br>• you are walking normally<br>• pain free and ceased strong pain relief medications<br><br>If you have had your **RIGHT hip or knee replaced or you drive a manual car,** you cannot drive until 6 weeks post surgery.<br><br>It is important to be safe before recommencing driving. If you need to drive sooner please discuss this with your doctor. |
| **Resuming sexual activity** | You can resume sexual activity in a passive position when you feel comfortable.<br>Avoid flexing your hip past 90 degrees. You may support your operated hip with a pillow. |