

Rehab: What to expect after your knee replacement

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Most people who have had a knee replacement would agree that the

procedure brings relief from pain.

And following a [comprehensive rehabilitation plan](#) can make recovery quicker and easier, and improve long-term mobility, according to doctors at Penn Medicine, in Pennsylvania.

Typically, immediately after [knee replacement](#) surgery, patients are moved to a recovery room for one to three hours. Those who are able to start moving sooner may have fewer complications, experts say.

Patients are encouraged to get up and move as soon as it is practical and safe. The orthopedic teams assist the patient in walking short distances with crutches or a walking frame.

Most people will be discharged from the hospital the day after surgery.

Some may be given the option to go home the same day. Those patients must be in relatively [good health](#) and have a dependable support system to help them at home.

Patients who have a knee replacement go home with directions for incision care, medications, required follow-up visits and lists of restrictions, such as no driving or showering.

Like most [health systems](#), Penn Medicine has a system for managing pain after [knee replacement](#), which reduces the need for [pain medications and narcotics](#), the doctors pointed out in a news release.

A physical therapist will help ensure that the patient is correctly using a walker or crutches, both for safety and comfort. If an inpatient rehabilitation center is best for the patient, a [social worker](#) will check on and arrange for insurance coverage.

In many cases, for patients returning home, the hospital will arrange for the physical and [occupational therapy](#) at the house, beginning the next day. The length of therapy depends on a patient's specific needs.

Incorporating exercises into the [daily routine](#) at home is important, the experts noted.

The doctors at Penn urge patients to focus on bending and straightening the knee as best they can, while also doing specific assigned exercises. The exercises are designed to strengthen muscles surrounding the knee joints and increase range of motion.

Those exercises should be done as instructed by the doctor.

More information: The U.S. National Library of Medicine has more on [knee replacement](#).

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