

ASK US WHY

Joint replacement surgery can empower you to live free from joint pain.

At Reading Hospital, our expert orthopedic surgeons use the latest techniques and technologies to provide a range of customized joint replacement options that can alleviate your pain and expedite your recovery time.

Q&As

How long will I be in the hospital?

Most patients stay overnight for one to two nights. Some patients are able to return home the same day as their surgery.

Where do I go after my hospitalization?

The majority of patients return home. A case manager will assist you with your discharge plans. Insurances vary and may limit options. Outpatient therapy is the ideal plan for joint replacement patients. On average, patients will go to an outpatient therapist about three times a week, for two to four weeks. If there are issues with getting to a therapist, home health therapy may be an option.

Are there any tips to prepare my home for after surgery?

All furniture should be placed to allow for clear and wide pathways. Remove small throw rugs that could cause a fall. Tuck electrical cords away from paths. Place night-lights in areas that will enhance your line of sight during the night if you leave the bed. Prepare foods that are easy to make before surgery and stock your freezer. Move items that you use often to waist height. More tips will be shared with you as you begin the journey.

How long will I have pain?

Our goal is to minimize your discomfort, but the amount of pain varies from individual to individual. You should note a gradual reduction in pain over the first few weeks after surgery.

How long will the swelling last?

Swelling may last about two to three months for total knee replacement patients and about one month for total hip replacement patients.

How long do I need to use the walker or cane?

Expect to use the walker anywhere from one to four weeks, depending on the function of the replaced joint. You may need to use a cane for a brief time or several weeks. If you have other mobility issues, you may require assistive devices longer.

How long will I need to take a blood-thinning medicine?

It will depend on the medicine and your prior health history. Most patients are on this type of medicine for two to four weeks.

When can I shower?

The therapist in the hospital will review shower safety with you. Most patients are able to shower when they return home.

When can I return to work?

Plan to resume your work schedule in about three months, however this may depend upon the type of work you do. Your physician or nurse navigator will work with you to determine when you can return to normal activities based on your joint function.

When can I drive?

On average, most patients resume driving in about four to six weeks, but this can vary. Consult your physician to understand when it's safe for you to resume driving.

When do I start strengthening exercises?

Ideally, it's beneficial to do some strengthening exercises before surgery. After surgery, you'll receive a modified exercise program. It may take some time before you feel you are returning to normal function.

When can I do normal around-the-house activities?

When you arrive home, you should follow all of the activities your therapists showed you. For example, you may climb stairs one after the other — just follow the technique you were taught. Knee replacement patients can begin to kneel when they feel comfortable.

When can I resume recreational activities?

It depends on the type of activity and how well you are moving. Consult with your therapist and physician to ensure it's safe for you to resume any recreational activities.

When can I resume sexual activities?

Generally, within several weeks of surgery, depending on your comfort.

Will I be able to go through metal detectors?

It is possible that you will set off a metal detector. Ask your surgeon or the hospital for a joint prosthesis identification card to carry with you.

What else do I need to know?

Information about follow-up care, diet, incisional care and medications will be discussed with you before you are discharged from the hospital. Please ask if there is something you do not understand. Once you are discharged, you may still have questions or concerns that are important. Please feel free to contact your physician's office or call 484-628-5168.

Discover more about the ways joint replacement surgery at Reading Hospital can help you thrive again at [RHOrtho.org](https://www.rhortho.org).

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