

The Hip/Knee Replacement Timeline

Everything you need to know from scheduling surgery to full recovery.



Surgery Is Scheduled.

- One of our surgery schedulers will reach out to you to schedule your surgery. Date and location will be confirmed.
- Begin planning time off work and help at home.



4-6 Weeks Before Surgery

- Visit primary care physician (PCP) for medical clearance
- See other specialists if needed (cardiology, pulmonology, etc.)
- Complete preoperative blood work and testing as ordered
- Complete CT scan (if ordered)
- Begin strengthening (“prehab”) exercises
- Prepare home to reduce fall risk



Preoperative Visit:

1-2 Weeks Before Surgery

- Visit with Dr. Gopinath’s surgical team in clinic
- Review surgical plan, risks, and benefits
- Discuss pain control and blood clot prevention plan
- Review postoperative rehab expectations
- Confirm arrival location and transportation for surgery
- Pre-op education class (if offered)



Day of Surgery

- Arrive at hospital or surgery center
- Anesthesia: spinal or general
- Surgery typically lasts 1-2 hours
- Begin walking the same day
- Most patients go home the same day or the next day



Weeks 0-2 After Surgery: Early Recovery

- Walk with walker or cane
- Manage pain and swelling (ice, elevation, medications)
- Follow 20/20/20 rule
- Incision care and monitoring

Goals: Safe walking, basic self-care, pain control



Weeks 2-6 After Surgery: Regaining Independence

- Transition from walker to cane or no assistive device
- Increase walking distance and activity
- Start outpatient therapy
- Resume light daily activities
- Drive when safe and off narcotic pain medication



Weeks 6-12 After Surgery: Functional Recovery

- Significant improvement in pain and mobility
- Return to most daily activities
- Return to work (job-dependent)



3-6 Months After Surgery: Advanced Recovery

- Continued improvement in strength and stamina
- Return to low-impact activities (walking, cycling, swimming, golf)
- Mild stiffness or swelling may still occur



6-12 Months After Surgery: Full Recovery

- Final healing and strength gains
- Most patients feel full benefit of surgery
- Long-term joint protection and routine follow-up



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