

Patient Roadmap: Preparing for joint replacement surgery and return home



What steps will I take to have joint replacement surgery?

START HERE

1. Visit surgeon

Your surgeon will tell you what therapy group you will be in:

- Quickstep Group
- Steady Group (details on back page).

Your surgeon will tell you if you will have 'hip precautions':

- No or N/A (knee replacement)
- Yes hip precautions (details on back page).

If you decide you want to have surgery, complete the 'Recommendation for Admission' (RFA) form and return it. You will then be placed on the waitlist and given details for attending Joint Class.

2. Attend Joint Class (education session)

Soon after you are on the waitlist, attend the compulsory education session for further information about joint replacement surgery at Northern Sydney Local Health District (NSLHD) hospitals – including how to be 'fit for surgery' and prepared to go home after surgery.

3. Visit GP and other services

Visit your GP to make sure you will be 'fit for surgery'. It is highly recommended that you attend the Osteoarthritis Chronic Care Program (OACCP) to further prepare you for your operation. (You will be mailed an invitation for this service.) You may also need to see a specialist.

5. 1-2 weeks before surgery:

- Stop medication as advised

1 day before surgery:

- Prepare skin for surgery with pre-surgery wash
- Commence fasting as advised.

Ready for Surgery

4. 1 month before surgery: attend Pre-Admission Clinic (PAC)

Your hospital team will check that you are:

- Fit for surgery e.g. no anaemia, skin is maintained
- Prepared to go home after surgery

You can discuss specific requirements for your hospital stay here.

No: Surgery cancelled/ postponed:
PAC will arrange for review until fit for surgery.

6. Have joint replacement surgery at hospital

You will start exercises soon after surgery. You will be ready to go home by:

- Quickstep Group: home 3 days after surgery
- Steady Group: home 4-5 days after surgery.

If required, Inpatient Rehabilitation in local hospital**.

Most people don't need Inpatient Rehabilitation and will return directly home.

7. Recovery at home

Continue your recovery at home with a Home Based Therapy Service* and/or visits to the Physio Clinic (in local facility or private**).

See your GP for review of medications and wound care.

8. 6 weeks after surgery: Attend surgeon follow up.

* Home Based Therapy Services are only available to people living in the Northern Sydney Local Health District (NSLHD) boundaries. This includes Local Government Areas of Hunters Hill, Lane Cove, North Sydney, Mosman, Willoughby, Ryde, Hornsby, Ku-ring-gai, Manly, Pittwater and Warringah.

** People living outside NSLHD boundaries will be referred for Physio Clinics and Inpatient Rehabilitation (if required) in their local health district.

What can I do to optimise my preparation and recovery?

Take the 'AdvaNSYD' path. The things you can do are:

- A Active participant.** Be an active participant by attending all appointments including the education session, asking questions, and working hard to achieve your surgery and health goals.
- D Doctors checks.** Before surgery, see your GP early to do pre-surgery checks and make a plan to prepare for surgery. You might also need to have reviews with Specialists.
- V Volunteer (family/friends).** Before surgery, you need to arrange for someone who can assist you while you are in hospital and after going home. Specifically, you will need:
 - Someone to pick up equipment while you are in hospital e.g. crutches from a pharmacy
 - Someone to drive you home from hospital after 3-5 days with your equipment
 - Someone to give you assistance at home e.g. with cooking, cleaning (about 1-2 weeks)
 - Someone to drive you to appointments (for about 6 weeks after surgery)
 - Someone to give you daily injections (if you cannot do this for yourself).Note: If you care for someone, you will need to arrange who will care for them.
- A Activities at home.** Before surgery, think about your 'daily activities' at home (e.g. cooking, dressing, showering) and plan how you might do them if you are using crutches after surgery, or are unable to reach down to your feet.
- N No cuts/scratches/grazes, infections (e.g. urinary tract infection), high blood sugar or anaemia.** Before surgery, if you have these conditions your surgery will be cancelled/postponed until they are managed.
- S Strength and movement.** Strong muscles and good joint movement are very important both before and after surgery. After surgery you need to start exercises straight away- be prepared to work hard after surgery. After you go home you need to keep working on your strength and movement for at least 6 weeks.
- Y Do more for yourself:** After surgery, to regain your independence, you need to do a little bit more for yourself every time you get dressed, have a shower, get on/off a chair, or go for a walk. This will help you achieve your hospital goals.
- D Directly home. After surgery,** most patients go directly home and complete their recovery with visits to the Physio Clinic. There is good research to show that people recover well at home after surgery.

What does my therapy group mean?

Northern Sydney hospitals have developed two therapy programs for recovery after surgery. Most patients will be appropriate for the 'Quickstep group', however if you are >80 years, currently need support at home, or are having surgery on both legs, you will need to be in the 'Steady group'.

What are 'hip precautions'?

After a hip replacement, some people must follow hip precautions to decrease the risk of hip dislocation. Hip precautions are certain movements that place extra stress on the hip joint e.g. bending your hip past 90 degrees. If you have hip precautions you will be given specific instructions and training.

When can I drive after surgery?

You must not drive after surgery until you have clearance from your surgeon. Surgery affects your capacity to control your vehicle and drive safely. Your surgeon will take into account your specific situation, however most people obtain clearance at about 6 weeks after surgery. We recommend you discuss this with your surgeon at your 6 week appointment.