



# A guide to Joint Replacement Surgery

## Required Reading for Patient and Caregiver

*A patient-friendly guide explaining what to expect before and after your surgery.*

## Welcome.

We are pleased that you have chosen the Knee & Hip Center at Kenmore Mercy Hospital's Orthopedic Campus of Excellence, Western New York's leader in joint replacement surgery for more than 25 years. Your decision to have elective joint replacement surgery is the first step towards a healthier lifestyle.

When you choose Kenmore Mercy, you are choosing a hospital committed to patient safety and quality of care, which is demonstrated by its numerous awards. Kenmore Mercy was the first hospital in Western New York to earn Disease-Specific Care Certification from The Joint Commission in both hip and knee joint replacements in 2011, and has been recertified each cycle since. It remains the only program in the area to earn this certification. It also earned the prestigious Magnet recognition for nursing excellence in 2017, and was redesignated in 2022. In addition, Kenmore Mercy Hospital received consecutive A's for patient safety from The Leapfrog Group since 2014.

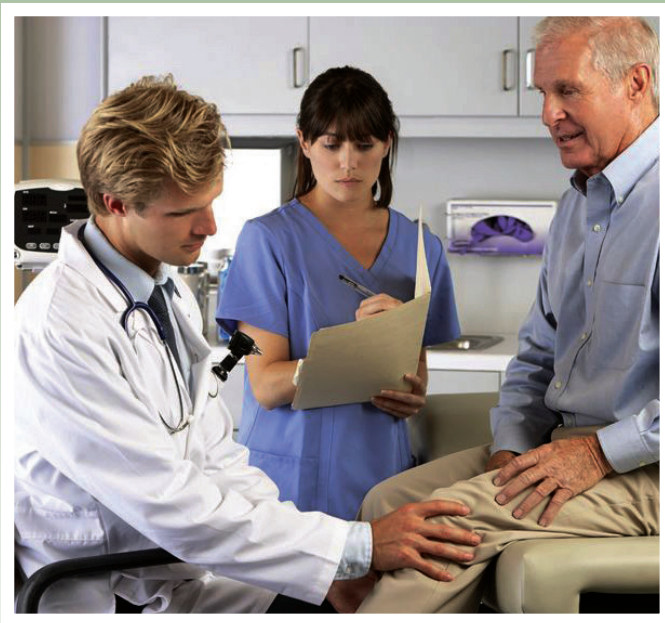
Our specialized team of orthopedic physicians, nurses, and rehabilitation staff take pride in delivering outstanding care for patients through leadership, education, innovation and excellence in medicine. Furthermore, many nursing team members have earned Orthopedic Nursing Certification. This special credential documents an advanced level of knowledge and practice in orthopedic nursing.

This team has implemented a comprehensive planned course of treatment designed to relieve your pain, restore your independence, and return you to work and other daily activities. Our goal is to involve you in your treatment throughout each step of the program. Every detail, from pre-operative teaching to post-operative exercising, is considered and reviewed with you. This guide will provide you the necessary information to promote a more successful surgical outcome.

Communication is key to outstanding patient care. That is why Kenmore Mercy Hospital encourages active participation with patients and families. Your questions and ongoing feedback is necessary to maintain quality care.

*Thank you for choosing  
Kenmore Mercy's Knee & Hip Center.*





## Orthopedic Campus of Excellence

*You have been living with joint pain for some time.  
You and your doctor have decided that joint replacement is an option for you.*

At Kenmore Mercy Hospital, we want to ensure that your experience before, during, and after joint replacement surgery is excellent. The first step is education.

We are proud to provide this guide for each patient because we believe that well-informed patients have better outcomes.

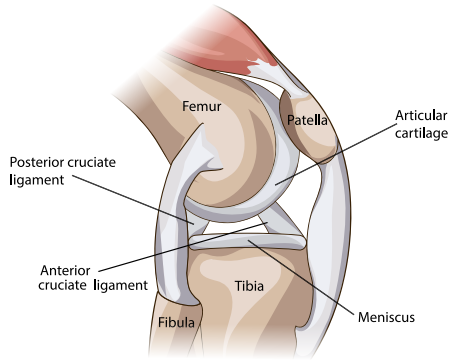
## Table of Contents

How Your Joints Work .....	4
Before the Hospital .....	5
Two Days Before Surgery .....	8
The Day of Surgery.....	10
During Your Hospital Stay.....	12
Discharge From the Hospital.....	15
After Leaving the Hospital.....	16
Caring for Yourself at Home.....	18



# How Your Joints Work

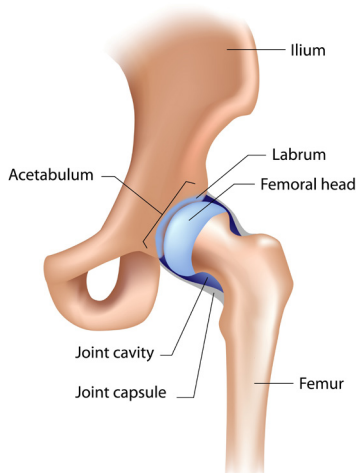
## Knee Joint



The knee is a hinged joint that allows your leg to bend and straighten. The knee is where the thigh bone (femur) and shin bone (tibia) meet. Your knee cap (patella) covers where the two bones meet.

Knee replacement surgery (arthroplasty) is done to remove the damaged part of the joint and replace it with man-made materials (implant or prosthesis). The implants are made of a variety of materials including titanium, stainless steel, ceramic, and polyethylene (plastic). Your surgeon will choose the implant that is most appropriate for you.

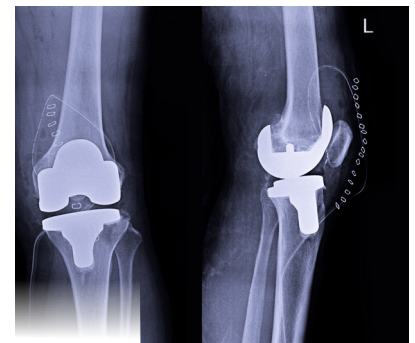
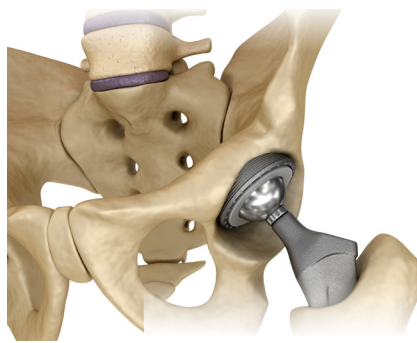
## Hip Joint



The hip is a ball and socket joint that allows multidirectional movement and rotation. The hip joint is formed where the round ball (femoral head) at the head of thigh bone (femur) and the socket of the pelvis (acetabulum) meet.

Hip replacement surgery (arthroplasty) is done to remove the damaged part of the joint and replace it with man-made materials (implant or prosthesis). The implants are made of a variety of materials including titanium, stainless steel, ceramic, and polyethylene (plastic). Your surgeon will choose the implant that is most appropriate for you.

***The goal of joint replacement surgery is to decrease your pain and to increase the strength and mobility of your joint.***



# Before the Hospital

*There are a few things that need to happen before your surgery.*

## Pre-Operative Class

When you come to the pre-operative class, you will learn how to prepare for surgery, pre-operative exercises, how to manage your pain and other issues that may arise during your joint replacement journey. We understand the importance of family and friends as you recover from surgery and we encourage their involvement in your care.

If you have further questions about this class or your surgery, please contact our orthopedic clinical advisor at **(716) 253-4629**.

## Pre-Admission Testing

You will be called to schedule pre-admission testing at the hospital three to four weeks prior to your surgery date. Please be sure you are ready for your appointment and bring the following:

- Your insurance card.
- Another form of identification (driver's license, etc...).
- All of your medications, including over the counter, in their **original containers**.  
*You will receive instructions during your pre-admission testing appointment on what medications, if any, should be stopped before surgery and what medications, if any, need to be taken the morning of your surgery.*
- A completed New York State Health Care Proxy form. Please ask for this at registration or download a copy from [health.ny.gov](http://health.ny.gov) (go to forms at bottom of the page and select Health Care Proxy).

You will be asked questions concerning pain levels as well as tobacco, alcohol and drug use. Be honest when answering these questions. Your answers will help us in planning your care.

## Medical Clearance

Before you have your surgery it is important for your primary care doctor to evaluate your current health status. Your doctor may order additional testing or evaluation in order to optimize your medical status prior to undergoing joint replacement surgery. You will also need clearance from your cardiologist if you have one.

## Preparing Your Home

Setting up your home for your return will help make you more comfortable during recovery. In anticipation of your return home, you may want to stock up on non perishable or easily prepared food items. "Fall-proof" your home by removing throw rugs (with the exception of a rubber-backed mat outside the tub), electrical cords, foot stools and clutter in your walking path. Keep in mind that your walking path must be at least 21 inches wide to accommodate any assistive devices (walker, cane) that you will need when you return home. If you are having hip surgery, a stable chair with a firm back, arms, and a high seat will allow you to get up easily.

Some individuals may require a short term stay at a subacute rehabilitation center before returning home. **You may choose to visit a facility and pre-register there prior to your surgery.** Catholic Health has rehabilitation locations for you to choose from.

## Pre-operative Exercises

In preparation for your total joint replacement surgery, we encourage you to perform the following exercises two times daily to condition and strengthen your muscles prior to surgery. Perform each exercise with your surgical, then your non-surgical leg. Please perform exercises in your bed. The condition of your muscles will determine how many repetitions you will be able to do. This can vary from five to eight repetitions per exercise to twenty to thirty repetitions. Do as many repetitions as possible, but do not cause strain.

### Ankle Pumps -

Lie on your back. Bend ankles up and down alternating feet.



### Gluteal Sets -

Lie on your back. Squeeze buttock muscles tightly and hold for five seconds.



### Quad Sets -

Lie on your back with your legs extended. Slowly tighten muscles in the front of the thigh and hold for five seconds, then relax. Repeat with other leg.



*We recommend using a small folded towel behind your knee when doing these exercises.*

### **Straight Leg Raise -**

Lie on your back. Bend one leg. Keep the other leg straight and lift the straight leg 6-8 inches off the bed keeping the knee locked. Hold for a few seconds. Slowly lower the leg.



### **Heel Slides -**

Lie on your back. Bend your knee. Slide your heel up toward your buttocks. Go as far as you can and hold for five seconds. Then slide your heel back down until your leg is straight. Repeat with the other leg.



### **Knee Extension -**

Sit in a chair with both feet flat on the floor. Slowly straighten leg and hold for five seconds. Then slowly bend your leg under the chair, bringing it back as far as you can. Hold for 10 to 20 seconds. Return your leg to the starting point. Repeat with other leg.



# Two Days Before Surgery

## Packing for the Hospital

It is best to bring as little as possible to the hospital and to leave cash, jewelry and other valuables at home. You may however, want to pack a few personal items to make your hospital stay more comfortable:

- light robe
- chewing gum
- deodorant

It is not necessary to bring soap or linen.

Remember to wear or bring loose, comfortable clothes for your rehabilitation exercises:

- T-shirts/sweatshirts
- Shorts/sweat pants (no elastic at the ankles)
- Socks and Sneakers or other rubber soled shoes

*Your family will keep your belongings until you are settled in your room after surgery.*



### What was that about packing gum?

In an effort to reduce your risk of a post-operative ileus (decrease intestinal motility), which is a potential complication of joint replacement surgery, Kenmore Mercy Hospital is encouraging all post-operative joint replacement patients to chew gum while admitted in the hospital. Nursing research has proven that by simply chewing gum regularly after surgery, you decrease your chance of suffering a post-operative ileus.

We ask that for your hospital stay, you bring sugar-free chewing gum to be chewed after surgery while you are in the hospital. The nursing staff will have you chew a piece of gum at a minimum of three times a day after every meal (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) for 30 minutes. If you have dentures there is sugar free chewing gum approved for chewing with dentures which include **Freedent**, **Dentyne** and **Epic**.



## Showering Before Surgery

Because skin is not sterile, we need to make sure your skin is as free of germs as possible before surgery. You can reduce the number of germs on your skin by following these washing instructions before surgery.

**You will need to shower with a special soap called chlorhexidine gluconate (CHG)\*.**

A common brand name is **Hibiclens**. We will provide you with a bottle of Hibiclens soap when you come for your pre-operative testing appointment. You can also purchase it at your local pharmacy.

1. Shower with CHG three times:  
**two nights before** your surgery, the **night before** your surgery, AND the **morning of your surgery**.  
*Do not shave any area of your body.*  
*(Men may shave their face.)*
2. When you wash your hair, do so with regular shampoo. Then rinse your hair and body thoroughly to remove any shampoo residue.
3. Wash your face with water or your regular soap.
4. Apply the CHG soap from the neck down.  
*Do not use CHG soap near your eyes, ears, or mouth to avoid permanent injury to internal areas. Avoid the groin area.*
5. Turn the water off to prevent rinsing soap off too soon. Wash your body gently from the neck down with a clean wash cloth for five minutes.  
*Do not scrub your skin too hard.*  
*Do not wash with regular soap after CHG is used.*
6. Turn the water back on and rinse your body thoroughly.
7. Pat yourself dry with a clean towel after each shower.
8. Do not apply lotions, perfumes, powders or deodorant after your shower on the day of surgery.
9. Dress with freshly laundered clothes.

\*CHG is not to be used by people with an allergy to chlorhexidine.

Please report any rashes, infections, open areas or sores to your surgeon before your scheduled surgery for further instructions.

## Eating Before Surgery

The night before surgery you should have a well balanced meal. It is best to avoid very spicy food and foods that are high in fat.

**DO NOT eat or drink anything after midnight the night before surgery, unless directed otherwise by your surgeon.** This will help prevent any nausea from the anesthesia.



# The Day of Surgery

The afternoon before your surgery, you will receive a telephone call from your surgeon's office to inform you of the time to report to the hospital. If your surgery is scheduled for Monday, you will receive a call on Friday.



## Dos and Don'ts for the Day of Surgery

### ▶ Do

- Do shower the morning of surgery with Hibiclens and put on clean clothes.
- Do brush your teeth.
- Do follow pre-admission directions regarding medications, if any, to be taken the morning of surgery.
- Do bring any medication that has changed since pre-admission testing, in its **original container**.
- Do inform the nurse of any changes in your medications or treatments.
- Do bring your sleep apnea machine or a record of current settings if you have one.
- Do arrive at the hospital at the designated time, as designated by your surgeon's office.
- Do wear comfortable clothes, sneakers or shoes with rubber soles.
- Do bring your dentures, hearing aides, eye glasses or other personal items if you need them.
- Do bring your rescue inhaler, if you use one.

### ▶ Don't

- Don't eat or drink unless instructed by your physician.
- Don't wear any makeup. Toenail polish is permitted. If wearing fingernail polish, it must be clear.
- Don't apply skin or hair products.
- Don't wear contact lenses.
- Don't take any medications unless instructed otherwise.

## What to Expect

While in the pre-operative area, you will change into a hospital gown and have the opportunity to use the bathroom. There may be additional forms and testing to be completed prior to being taken to surgery. An antibacterial skin preparation may be applied prior to surgery to reduce the risk of infection. An intravenous catheter, a thin tube, will be placed in a vein in your arm to deliver fluids into your body. The orthopedic surgeon and anesthesiologist will meet with you and review your medical history prior to surgery. You will receive medication to prepare you for surgery prior to being taken to the operating room.

Your family members may stay with you in the pre-operative area until the time of your surgery. They should then wait in the surgical waiting area to speak with the orthopedic surgeon or his/her designee after the surgery is complete. A volunteer will direct them to the surgical unit.

In the recovery room, your vital signs will be monitored; you will receive medications to control your pain and nausea (if any); and may have X-rays taken of your new joint. Once you meet the criteria, you will be transferred to the surgical unit where the nursing team will begin providing care and your family will be allowed into your room.

## Following Your Progress While in Surgery

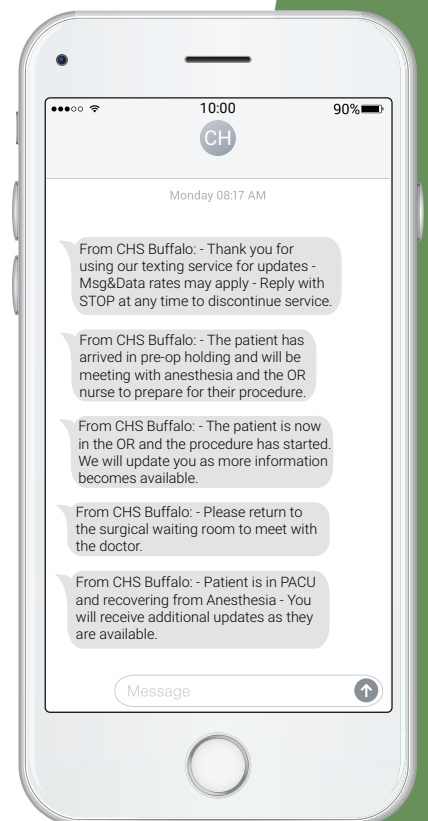
You will be asked if you are interested in having status updates sent to your family via text message. At this time, you will have the opportunity to sign a consent form and select a family member or friend whom you would like to receive updates to their cell phone. Please provide their telephone number and they will instantly receive a test text.

Your loved one can expect to receive automatic updates when:

- you transfer to the pre-operative holding room (Pre-Op);
- you enter the Operating Room (OR);
- you move to recovery, the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU);
- you are ready to transfer to your hospital room.

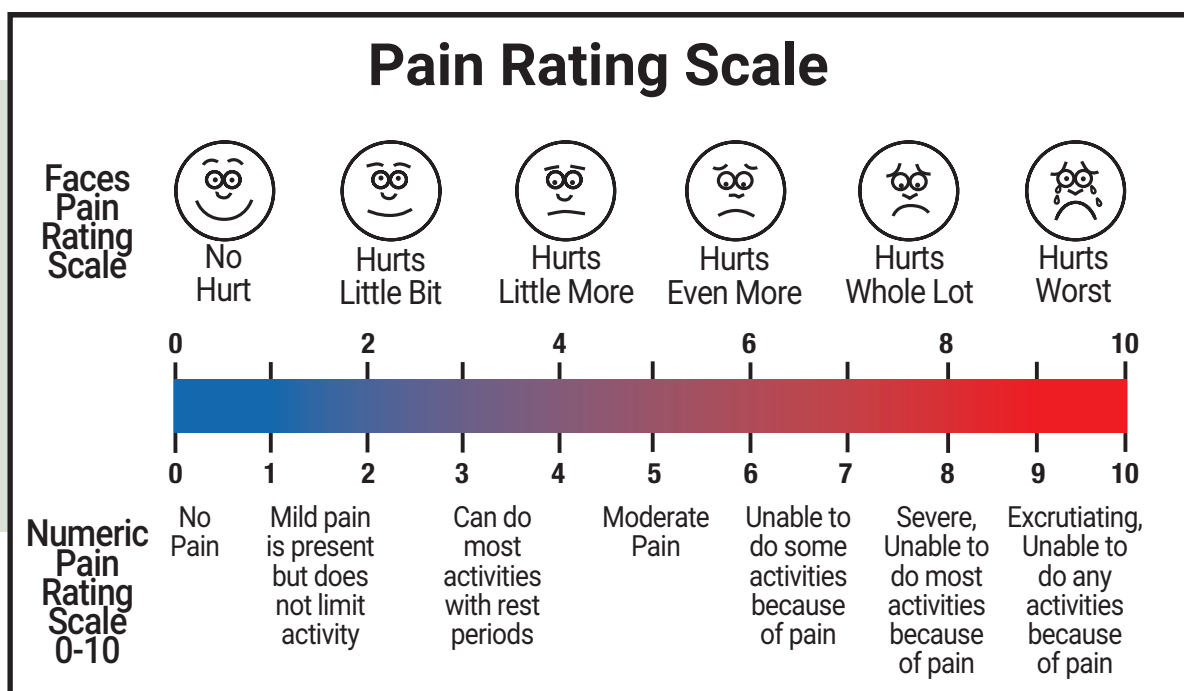
Additional messages may be sent, if necessary. We hope that providing this service will allow you peace of mind knowing that your family is always aware of your progress.

Family at the hospital are also able to track your status at a glance via color-coded progress boards. These electronic boards are available in the surgical waiting area, the cafeteria and other parts of the hospital. A confidential code will be provided to you and your family at check-in. This allows your party to know which board entry refers to you, so they will be able to follow your progress.



## During Your Hospital Stay

It is important to get adequate rest during your recovery. To optimize your recovery, we recommend that only one or two close family members, over the age of 14-years old, visit you the day of surgery. Visiting hours are 9 am till 9 pm. Visitors with a cold or fever are best to stay home. Please check with the hospital regarding any changes to these regulations.



### Pain Scale

A 10-point pain scale using zero (no pain) to 10 (worst pain ever) will help you verbalize the intensity of your pain both before and after a pain medication is given and during therapy sessions. Our goal is for your pain to be at maximum in the 3-4 range at rest.

### Managing Pain

Some pain is expected after surgery. We will work with you to help set a reasonable pain goal and manage pain in the best way so you can fully participate in therapy. Your pain will lessen every day. There are a variety of methods used to relieve pain.

- **Pain medications** are ordered to relieve your pain. Your orthopedic surgeon, the physician assistant or nurse practitioner will select the type and route of administration (oral, intravenous) based on your medical needs. It is best to take your pain medication on a regular basis and avoid long periods without pain medication.
- **Cryo therapy** is the application of ice to the surgical site to decrease the amount of swelling and therefore decrease pain. You will be encouraged to use cryo therapy during your recovery.
- **Exercises** you learn in physical therapy will help decrease swelling and strengthen muscles thereby decreasing your pain. Physical therapy may be done in your room or in the physical therapy gym. Participation in physical therapy is essential for your recovery.

## Preventing Blood Clots/Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT)

Surgery, limited mobility, advanced age and/or previous blood clotting abnormalities may put you at risk of developing blood clots. Preventative techniques to reduce this risk may include blood thinning medications, and the use of foot pumps designed to assist with circulation. Beginning physical therapy as soon as you are able and following your recommended leg exercises will also help to promote blood flow.

## Medication Side Effects

Constipation is a common side effect of pain medications. You will have medications ordered to help prevent constipation. Adequate fluids and fiber can also help prevent constipation. Nausea can also occur after surgery. Please let your nurse know if you feel nauseous. Medications can be given to relieve your nausea.

## Routine Medications

Medications you were taking at home are usually ordered for you during your hospital stay unless there is a medical reason to discontinue them for a short time. Never take any medication during your hospital stay unless the nurse dispenses it to you. If you have questions or concerns about the medications you are receiving, please discuss them with your nurse.

## Food and Fluids

During the initial hours after surgery you may not have much of an appetite but it is important to begin drinking liquids as tolerated. Gradually increasing fluids and food will increase your strength. You will have fluids going through your IV at first. The IV will be stopped when you are eating and drinking well. You can order your meals by dialing 7-FOOD (73663) approximately one hour before your desired meal time. Breakfast meal service begins at 6:30 am.

## Important Reminders During Your Hospital Stay

### Do

- Do follow staff instructions regarding how to safely get in and out of bed.
- Do use your assistive devices.
- Do report increases in pain, light-headedness and nausea.

### Don't

- Don't get up by yourself until instructed to do so.
- Don't take medications that are not given to you by the nurse.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions.

## Medical Personnel

While you are in the hospital, your care will be provided by a variety of medical professionals.

- Your **orthopedic surgeon** assisted you in making the decision to proceed with your surgery, performs your surgery, and directs your care after surgery.
- **Physician assistants** and **nurse practitioners** are health care professionals with advanced education. They work with your orthopedic surgeon to manage your care during your hospital stay.
- An **anesthesiologist** is the physician who is responsible for your anesthesia management issues before, during, and immediately after surgery.
- Your **medical doctor** or a **hospitalist** manages your routine medical needs during your hospital stay.
- Your **orthopedic clinical advisor** is a certified orthopedic nurse who provides education to you and your family about a variety of topics including your health and safety needs before and after surgery.
- **Registered nurses** provide your bedside care and education following your surgery. They provide daily updates in your plan of care, and they assist in your discharge plan.
- **Nursing attendants** provide day-to-day bedside care, assisting you with personal hygiene needs, moving about using assistive devices, and ensuring your comfort and wellness.
- A **physical therapist** works with you to regain muscle strength, range of motion and balance after your surgery.
- An **occupational therapist** will assist you with learning techniques to complete your daily activities such as bathing and dressing yourself.
- A **respiratory therapist** will manage any respiratory needs, including using CPAP and BiPAP. A therapist or nurse will instruct you on the use of an incentive spirometer to improve your breathing.
- **Discharge planners** work closely with your surgeon and your care team members to formulate your discharge plan. The discharge planner can also answer your questions about insurance coverage for services and equipment.
- **Spiritual care personnel** represent a variety of faiths and are available to patients and their families.
- A **pharmacist** can assist you with understanding how and when to take your medications including avoiding interactions and minimizing side effects.
- Our **registered dietitians** will help develop a meal plan to meet your nutritional needs.

## Discharge From the Hospital

Some patients will have a specialized plan for same-day or overnight treatment. You will be seen by a therapist to increase mobility, and to gain confidence in your knowledge of exercises and safety precautions.

**We anticipate most patients will be prepared for discharge the day of surgery.**

Multiple factors will determine if you will be able to return directly home after discharge from the hospital, or if you would benefit from the care of a subacute rehabilitation facility (short term stay) before returning home. Age, overall health, assistance at home, physical barriers at home and insurance coverage may determine your discharge destination. Your discharge planner will assist you to make that transition.



If going directly **home**, you will receive instructions on how to climb stairs, and get in and out of a car safely. Your discharge planner will help arrange for all necessary equipment for your home. You may get items ahead of time, or get them from the hospital on the day of your discharge.

When **subacute rehabilitation** is necessary, the discharge planner will coordinate the date and time of your transfer. Transportation to the facility can be by wheelchair van or private car.

# After Leaving The Hospital

## Home

Patients have a choice of home care agencies in their geographic region, one of which is Catholic Health's McAuley-Seton, treating patients 365 days a year. Following discharge, a physical therapist will see you in your home. Additional medical professionals may be added to your care team if needed.

To reach McAuley-Seton Home Care in Erie County, call (716) 685-4870 and in Niagara County, call (716) 433-2475.

## Subacute Rehabilitation Center

If your orthopedic surgeon has concerns about your safety and well-being at home, he or she might recommend that you be discharged to a subacute rehabilitation center. Your care team and family members will assist you in making this decision and which facility is right for you. The subacute rehabilitation centers affiliated with Catholic Health are listed below.

Your discharge planner will assist you and your family to make these arrangements.



### Catholic Health Subacute Care Facilities

#### **McAuley Residence**

1503 Military Road  
Kenmore

Admission Coordinator  
(716) 447-6373

Main Switchboard  
(716) 447-6600

#### **Father Baker Manor**

6400 Powers Road  
Orchard Park

Admission Coordinator  
(716) 209-0790

Main Switchboard  
(716) 667-0001



*After your discharge to home or a subacute rehabilitation facility, we encourage our patients to start physical therapy as soon as possible.*



## Outpatient Physical Therapy

We believe that the greatest benefits from physical therapy occur in an outpatient center setting and strongly encourage outpatient appointments as soon after surgery as possible.

### Catholic Health Outpatient Rehabilitation Facilities

#### **AthletiCare Kenmore**

1495 Military Road, Kenmore  
(716) 447-6037

#### **AthletiCare Orchard Park**

Mercy Ambulatory Care Center  
3669 Southwestern Blvd., Orchard Park  
(716) 828-2455

#### **Mount St. Mary's Center for Sports Medicine and Physical Rehabilitation**

1 Colomba Dr., Ste. 5, Niagara Falls  
(716) 298-2249

#### **Partners in Rehab West Seneca**

550 Orchard Park Rd., West Seneca  
(716) 677-5022

#### **Partners in Rehab East Aurora**

94 Olean Street, East Aurora  
(716) 828-3700

#### **Sisters Metabolic Center for Wellness**

Sisters of Charity Hospital, St. Joseph Campus  
2605 Harlem Rd., Cheektowaga  
(716) 891-2703

## Caring For Yourself at Home

*Whether you go home or have a short stay at a subacute facility, there are a variety of things you need to know for your safety, your recovery, and your comfort.*

Depending on your needs, a physical/occupational therapist may come to your home in the weeks following your surgery.



### Caring For Your Incision

You will receive instructions on how to care for your incision before you go home. Some surgeons use specialty dressings that are waterproof while others prefer the standard gauze dressing that cannot get wet. Your surgeon will let you know when you can take a shower. You will not be able to sit in a tub for approximately twelve weeks.

### Returning to Everyday Activities

Joint replacement surgery is a major event in your life. The recovery time will vary from person to person based on their age, physical health and commitment to their rehabilitation program. Your surgeon will let you know when you can begin driving again. Your return to work is dependent on the type of work you do.

In some cases patients can return to work in as little as four weeks and with others it may be as long as three months. Sexual activity is not recommended during the initial recovery time due to pain and swelling. Total hip patients will need to avoid positions that may cause them to dislocate their hip.

### Continuing Physical Therapy

Your physical therapist can assist you in determining how many times per day you need to exercise your joint. However, many patients find that continuing to do their exercises increases their strength and endurance. Individuals who have had a hip replacement need to follow hip precautions for approximately eight weeks. Your orthopedic surgeon will let you know how long you should follow hip precautions.

### Achieving Your Level of Comfort

Your need for pain medication will decrease as you recover from joint replacement surgery. Most patients will gradually decrease their pain medication as they return to their everyday activities.

### Follow-up With Surgeon

You will be given specific instructions at the time of discharge from the hospital as to when to you need to follow-up with your orthopedic surgeon.

## What does it mean to be an Orthopedic Campus of Excellence?

At Kenmore Mercy, it means from prehab to rehab, you get the most proven experience, innovation, quality, specialized state-of-the-art care and customized rehabilitation services at one convenient location – all designed to help you get back to the things you love.



- Dedicated Knee & Hip Center with highly skilled and experienced medical team that has performed thousands of knee and hip replacements
- Blue Distinction® Center for spine surgery, knee replacement and hip replacement\*
- The only Joint Commission Specialty Certified Total Knee and Hip Replacement Center in the region
- Western New York's first site for robotic orthopedic surgery using the Mako® system
- Orthopedic-certified registered nurses available 24/7
- Outstanding surgical/medical care and pain management protocols, inpatient medical rehab, outpatient rehab, subacute care for transition from hospital to home, and exceptional home care rehab and nursing services
- Among the less than eight percent of hospitals nationally to be acknowledged by the Magnet Recognition Program for nursing excellence

\*Blue Distinction® Centers+ met overall quality measures for patient safety and outcomes, developed with input from the medical community and also met cost measures that address consumers' need for affordable healthcare. To learn more about Blue Distinction Centers for Specialty Care®, visit [bcbs.com](http://bcbs.com) or contact your Local Plan.

Accept nothing less than proven quality care – the Orthopedic Campus of Excellence at Kenmore Mercy, part of Catholic Health's acclaimed orthopedics program. For more information visit [chsbuffalo.org/Kenmore-Ortho](http://chsbuffalo.org/Kenmore-Ortho) or call HealthConnection at (716) 447-6205.



Catholic Health  
**Knee & Hip Center**  
At Kenmore Mercy Hospital

2950 Elmwood Avenue  
Kenmore, NY 14217

[chsbuffalo.org/Kenmore-Ortho](http://chsbuffalo.org/Kenmore-Ortho)  
(716) 447-6100



Blue  
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Spine



Blue  
Distinction®  
Center  
Knee/Hip

