

TRAUMA & ORTHOPAEDICS – Primary Total Knee Replacement

Introduction

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS ability to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify when treatment will take place. This document provides you with information on how you can support yourself while waiting to attend the hospital. The guidance has been written by clinicians who are responsible for your care.

Guidance for Patients

We want to help you manage your osteoarthritis while you wait for your surgery.

Now that you are on the waiting list for knee replacement surgery, it would help us if you could consider the following:

Health. Skin ulcers, general infections or any change in your health that occurs in the time between your clinic appointment and surgery will probably require prompt treatment to avoid cancellation. Some infections could lead to an infection in your new knee. Please see your GP if you are in doubt.

Keeping Active. Try to remain as fit and healthy as possible during your time on the waiting list as this will aid your recovery after surgery. It is better to take painkillers and stay mobile than not take anything and therefore limit your mobility.

Exercises. Start practising the exercises in the websites suggested in this document. Any strength gained preoperatively will improve post-operative recovery.

Smoking. Smoking on hospital premises is prohibited. Try to stop smoking before you come into hospital. If you smoke, you are at much higher risk of complications such as infection and clots in your veins or lungs. It may be useful to discuss nicotine replacement therapy with your GP or pharmacist before your admission.

Weight. If you are overweight, you should try and lose weight to minimise complications after surgery. Your GP will be able to help you with a weight loss programme.

Changing circumstances. If your situation changes in any way whilst you are on the waiting list - if you change address or decide you do not want to go ahead with surgery - please let the Admissions Department know so that your name can be taken off the list. Tel: 01823 342409.

There are also some very useful websites that can help you to manage some of the symptoms you are experiencing and provide guidance regarding help and support that you may be able to access.

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

Age UK - www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/health-wellbeing/conditions-illnesses/arthritis/

Age UK provides information on activities and exercise class held by local Age UK representatives. They also signpost to advice on healthy eating options and maintaining a healthy weight especially important if you are being considered for surgery, and some of the options available to get help in the home

Versus Arthritis - www.versusarthritis.org/

Versus Arthritis is an arthritis charity, especially geared towards helping individuals manage differing forms of arthritis. They have useful online exercise programmes especially designed for those with painful arthritic conditions that will help maintain flexibility. They also offer self-help tips for managing arthritic pain.

NHS Website living with arthritis - www.nhs.uk/conditions/arthritis/living-with/

This website carries useful information for those still at work and dealing with the impact of arthritis and useful links to financial and local government websites that may be able to offer you further support in your home.

Generally, while you are waiting for your surgery it is important to stay as healthy as you can both physically and mentally. That will help you get the best results in the long term. If you have any long-standing conditions such as high blood pressure you should get this regularly reviewed at your GP surgery to make sure it remains well controlled. This will also help prevent any unnecessary delays when you come for your pre-operative assessment. Maintaining a well-balanced diet is also important, as is reducing any excessive weight that may be impacting on your general health. If you are a current smoker or drink heavily, it would be advisable to seek support to help with stopping.

The NHS website has lots of tools and support to help with all of the above, all of which are good for your health generally, but if you are due to have an operation, they can also help you to recover more quickly from it.

For help and support with losing weight visit: www.nhs.uk/better-health/lose-weight/

For advice on eating well visit: www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/

For help and support with getting or keeping active visit: www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active/

For help and support with quitting smoking visit: www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/

For help and support with drinking less alcohol visit: www.nhs.uk/better-health/drink-less/

Some people change their mind about having a knee replacement. If you are not sure whether you still want or need to have it done, please contact the secretary of your named consultant to discuss this.

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

Your knee may gradually worsen over time – this is normal. If you experience an increase in pain, inability to weight bear on this limb or reduction in mobility, you should in the first instance contact your GP for review and advice. If your mobility deteriorates dramatically due to your knee problem, it may be necessary to get a new X-ray of the knee. If this is the case, please contact the secretary of your named consultant to inform them of the situation, and they will discuss this with your consultant. If you cannot find the name of your consultant, please contact any of the secretaries as they will be able to direct your query in the most appropriate way.

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

Urgent Health Advice

For urgent health advice about physical or mental health, when it's not an emergency, please call 111 from any landline or mobile phone. You can also visit www.nhs.uk. The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Life Threatening Emergencies

For something life threatening – severe bleeding, breathing difficulties or chest pains – please dial 999.

Contact Us

Admissions: 01823 342409

Orthopaedic Outpatient appointments bookings: 01823 342750 – select option 1 for bookings, then option 1 for T&O.