

Preparing your home for knee replacement recovery

A practical guide to mobility equipment, home setup and the first week after surgery.



Most people only need a small number of temporary items after a total knee replacement. Your hospital physiotherapist or occupational therapist will confirm what is right for your balance, home layout and recovery plan; this guide helps you prepare before admission.

Equipment worth organising early

Many items are needed for only a short time, so ask about hiring or borrowing. Most patients do not need a wheelchair, hospital bed or continuous passive motion machine unless the hospital team specifically recommends one.

1 2 wheel walker or crutches

A walker is common for the first stage at home. It should be adjusted to your height and checked by the hospital physiotherapist before discharge.

2 Firm chair with arms

Choose a stable chair that is not too low or deep. Armrests make sitting and standing safer while your knee is stiff or sore.

3 Toilet support

If your toilet is low, a raised toilet seat or over-toilet frame may help. Ask the ward team if you are unsure before buying.

4 Shower setup

A shower chair or stool, non-slip mat and hand-held shower head can make showering easier. Avoid climbing into a bath until cleared.

5 Ice packs

Have two or three reusable ice packs ready so one can be cooling while another is in use. Wrap cold packs in a towel.

6 Long-handled aids

A reacher, long-handled shoehorn or sock aid can help if bending is difficult in the early recovery period.



Room-by-room setup checklist

Walkways and entrances

- Remove loose rugs, cords and low clutter from walking paths.
- Check that steps, thresholds and outdoor paths are well lit.
- Keep the walker close to where you will get out of the car.

Bedroom

- Set up a clear path from bed to bathroom.
- Place phone, water, medications and glasses within easy reach.
- Avoid very low beds. You should be able to sit with hips and knees comfortable.

Bathroom

- Use a non-slip surface and keep the floor dry.
- Place soap, shampoo and towels at waist height.
- Do not rely on suction grab rails as your only support.

Kitchen

- Move everyday items between shoulder and waist height.
- Prepare simple meals or arrange help with shopping and cooking.
- Use a small backpack or shoulder bag to carry light items while using a walker.

Living area

- Choose a firm chair with arms as your main recovery chair.
- Keep ice packs, charging cables and reading glasses nearby.
- Make space for your home exercises without needing to move furniture.

Footwear and clothing

- Wear supportive, enclosed shoes or slippers with non-slip soles.
- Choose loose clothing that is easy to put on and remove.
- Keep compression stockings and dressings dry unless advised otherwise.

First week home: simple plan

1. Have a responsible adult available for transport home and practical help during the first few days.
2. Take pain relief and blood-thinning medication exactly as prescribed by the hospital team.
3. Walk little and often, using the aid recommended by your physiotherapist.
4. Do your knee exercises as instructed, then rest with the leg supported and use ice as directed.
5. Keep follow-up appointments and bring any questions about equipment, wound care or driving.

When to seek help

Call 000 for chest pain, severe shortness of breath, fainting or sudden collapse.

Contact the hospital, your GP or Ortho Precision promptly for fever, increasing wound redness or discharge, uncontrolled pain, new calf pain or swelling, or if you feel something is not right.

This brochure provides general information only. Your individual instructions from Dr Yas, your anaesthetist, the hospital, physiotherapist or occupational therapist should always take priority.