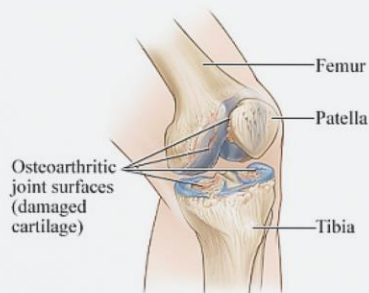


Concise, point-of-care instructions save time and improve outcomes

Total Knee Replacement: Before Your Surgery



What is a total knee replacement?

A total knee replacement replaces the worn ends of the bones where they meet at the knee. Those bones are the thighbone (femur) and the lower leg bone (tibia). Your doctor will remove the damaged bone. Then he or she will replace it with plastic and metal parts. These new parts may be attached to your bones with cement.

Your doctor will make a cut down the center of your knee. This cut is called an incision. It will be about 8 to 10 inches long. Sometimes the surgery can be done with a smaller incision that is 4 to 6 inches. Both kinds of incisions leave scars that usually fade with time.

Your doctor will let you know if you will stay in the hospital or if you can go home the day of surgery. If you have both knees done at the same time, you may need to be in the hospital for a few days. If there is no one to help you at home, you may go to a rehab center.

Most people go back to normal activities or work in 4 to 16 weeks. This depends on your health. It also depends on how well your knee does in your rehab program. This may take longer if you have both knees done at the same time.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

What happens before surgery?

Surgery can be stressful. This information will help you understand what you can expect. And it will help you safely prepare for surgery.

All our content is written in **plain language**, so your patients can understand and learn from the education you provide to them.

Every Healthwise Patient Instruction is available in **English and Spanish**, and the 250 most commonly used instructions are offered in 15 additional languages.

Engage patients with evidence-based information

What happens on the day of surgery?



- Follow the instructions exactly about when to stop eating and drinking. If you don't, your surgery may be canceled. If your doctor told you to take your medicines on the day of surgery, take them with only a sip of water.
- Take a bath or shower before you come in for your surgery. Do not apply lotions, perfumes, deodorants, or nail polish.
- Do not shave the surgical site yourself.
- Take off all jewelry and piercings. And take out contact lenses, if you wear them.

Going home



- Be sure you have someone to drive you home. Anesthesia and pain medicine make it unsafe for you to drive.
- You will be given more specific instructions about recovering from your surgery. They will cover things like diet, wound care, follow-up care, driving, and getting back to your normal routine.

When should you call your doctor?



- You have questions or concerns.
- You don't understand how to prepare for your surgery.
- You become ill before the surgery (such as fever, flu, or a cold).
- You need to reschedule or have changed your mind about having the surgery.

Where can you learn more?

Go to <https://www.healthwise.net/patientEd>

Enter **F652** in the search box to learn more about "Total Hip Replacement: Your Surgery".

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These short documents are **action-oriented**, so your patients can follow after-care instructions and practice self-care.

Identifying icons draw patients' attention to the most critical information, making it easier for them to understand and remember the key points.

Patients can quickly access more in-depth information and tools online with the **"Go-to-Web"** code included on each instruction.