

**Questions?**

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff are also available to help.

Bone and Joint:  
206-598-4288

Eastside Clinic:  
425-646-7777

**UW Medicine Orthopaedic Services**

**Weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., call:**

Bone and Joint Center.....206-598-4288

Eastside Clinic .....425-646-7777

**After hours and on weekends or holidays, call:**

Orthopaedic Resident.....206-598-6190

Orthopaedic Nurse .....206-598-4410

Physical or Occupational  
Therapist .....206-598-4830

Social Worker .....206-598-4370



# After Your Total Hip or Knee Surgery

This handout explains how to take care of yourself at home after your total hip or knee surgery. Knowing what to do and what to look for will help your recovery and prevent problems.

UW Medicine

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MEDICAL CENTER

**Orthopaedic Services/  
6-Southeast**

Box 356091  
1959 N.E. Pacific St. Seattle, WA 98195  
206-598-4410

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### **To Prevent Problems**

- Check your incision daily for drainage, redness, and tenderness.
- Keep your incision dry and covered with gauze dressing until your first clinic visit.
- Wear your elastic support stockings until your clinic visit.
- Take your medicine to prevent blood clots.
- To prevent constipation:
  - Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water every day.
  - Eat foods that are high in fiber, such as fruits, vegetables, bran, and whole grains.
  - Take stool softeners or laxatives as recommended.
- Tell your dentist or doctor that you have a prosthesis before having any dental work or surgery.

### **Home Safety**

- Wear sturdy, flat shoes with non-skid soles.
- Remove objects that could cause tripping, such as loose rugs.
- Use the bathroom equipment and dressing aids recommended by your occupational therapist.
- Allow yourself extra time to get around.
- Pace your activities. Stop and rest often.
- Do **not** drive while you are taking narcotic pain medicines. Do not start driving again until you receive an OK from your doctor.

### **Activity**

- Keep doing your physical therapy exercises 2 to 3 times a day after you leave the hospital.
- Allow time for your pain medicine to start working before you start your exercises.
- When you are sitting or lying, put your feet up. If you have had knee surgery, **do not** place a pillow or towel under your knee.
- Use your walker or crutches at all times. Your doctor or physical therapist will tell you when they are no longer needed for your safety.