

PLANNING AHEAD



The road to recovery is not often smooth and straight forward. With foresight and preparation, you can experience a smoother transition, not just in the hospital but also returning home, to work, and to a more active lifestyle. Before your surgery, plan and practice how you and your coach can safely progress your activities that have an inherent fall risk. Your occupational therapist or physical therapist can help address questions or concerns on this topic.

Preparing Your Home

Small adjustments and updates can make a big difference in your safety and comfort following a joint replacement surgery. We recommend setting up a central base on the entry level of your home and to consider the following:

- **Sit Taller:** Taller and firmer recliners, couches, or chairs with armrests allow for easier standing and sitting. Pair them with an ottoman or coffee table for elevation and straightening of legs. Fold up a firm blanket to add temporary height.
- **Avoiding Toilet Troubles:** Keep bathrooms close initially. You will not be moving as fast as you are used to and may need assistance at times. Early recognition of the need to use the restroom and ready assistance will improve your safety and comfort, especially for those with urgency issues.
- **Clear the Way:** Remove throw rugs, cords, clutter, and sharp or fragile objects from your way. Widen pathways for clear passage of a walker. Larger open areas are preferred for rehabilitation exercises and walking.
- **Entertain Yourself:** Positive distraction can be a powerful form of pain management and a mood booster.



PREPARING FOR SUCCESS

REDUCE YOUR Fall Risk

Remove Hazards: Perform home repairs ahead of time and arrange assistance for yard work or snow removal. If you have pets, create a plan to keep pets away from your incision and to prevent them from becoming a tripping risk.

Use Safety Equipment: If needed: Repair or add railing to stairs. Install grab bars, a non-slip mat, a handheld shower head, and a tub transfer bench in the bathroom. For toilet needs, you may want to obtain a bedside commode or toilet riser.

Add Lighting: Replace bulbs and add nightlights where light switches are not immediately within reach. Visit your eye care center before your surgery to update your glasses prescription, if needed.

Get Organized: Arrange frequently used items within easy reach and readily available. Plan to have your coach assist you with more difficult tasks such as stairs and bathing the first few times.

Ride in Comfort: Medium height vehicles are more comfortable getting in and out of. Slide the front passenger seat backwards and recline the seat back for comfort. Pillows can help support and elevate your surgical leg when returning home. Ask your physical therapist if you have any questions about car transfers.