Day of Surgery for Your Total Joint Replacement

Pre-Operative Holding Area/Ambulatory Surgery Unit (ASU)

- Your family will be allowed to stay with you until you go to the Pre-operative Holding Area or ASU. The nurse will answer any questions you and your family may have and will tell your family where to wait while you are in surgery.

- A nurse will talk with you when you arrive at the Pre-operative Holding Area or ASU. You will be asked to put on a hospital gown. Your clothes will be put in a bag and placed in a locker for safe keeping. Your hair will be covered with a paper hat, like that worn by the operating room staff.

- Your blood pressure, pulse, temperature, and breathing rate (vital signs) will be taken at this time. Other blood tests may be done if needed. You will have a needle put into your vein called an intravenous line, or IV, to give you fluids before, during and after surgery.

- You will be asked to write your initials on the skin over the correct hip or knee surgery site.

- Dentures or partial plates, contact lenses, eyeglasses, hearing aids, and anything not a normal part of your body must be removed before going to surgery. Nail polish, make-up, jewelry and hair clips must also be removed.

- While in the Pre-operative Holding Area or ASU, your anesthesiologist will talk with you.

- Please do not bring any valuables to the hospital, such as jewelry, money, credit cards, etc. The hospital will provide a gown and robe. You will need only to bring personal hygiene items.

More on next page ➔

Learn more about your health care.
Operating Room

The operating room where your surgery will take place is called a Laminar Flow Room. The flow of air current and special filters in this room is designed to lessen the risk of infection during joint replacement surgery.

All staff in the operating room wears scrub clothes, caps, and masks. You will notice that the room has bright lights and is very cool. Many pieces of special equipment and tables are set up with supplies and instruments. A scrub nurse or operating room technician gets the instruments and supplies ready for your surgery. The staff will explain things to you as they work with you.

A nurse will be in the Operating Room to greet you and check your identification (ID) bracelet. You will be asked about allergies. Then you will be made comfortable on the operating room table. A safety strap will be put over you so you stay on the table. You will be covered with an extra blanket if you are cold and your arms may be tucked in at your sides or put on an arm board.

Before surgery begins, the operating room staff will make sure your initials are seen at the surgical site.

During your surgery your vital signs will be closely checked. Leads used to monitor your heart will be put on your chest. They will be connected to a monitor that counts your heart rate. As the monitor counts your heart rate it makes a beeping noise. Your heart beat will also be seen on a screen. A small clip (pulse oximeter) is placed on your finger to measure your pulse and the amount of oxygen in your blood.

A Foley catheter will be placed during surgery to drain urine. This will be removed the next day.

The time it takes for your surgery is estimated. Your surgery may take a longer or shorter time than you and your family was told. If your surgery takes longer than you were told, it does not mean that anything is wrong. After your surgery, the surgeon will come to the waiting area or call to talk to your family.
Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU)

After your surgery you will be moved onto a bed and taken to the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU).

- While you are coming out of anesthesia, a PACU nurse will watch you closely and take your vital signs frequently.
- Your pulse and the amount of oxygen in your blood will be checked. You may feel cold and shiver.
- You may get oxygen through a tube or mask on your face.
- You may have pain.
- Please ask your nurse for pain medicine.
- There will be other patients and a lot of activity and noise in the PACU.
- The PACU nurse will try to wake you up during this time.
- X-rays may be taken while you are in the PACU.
- Having your joint replaced is major surgery. You might be in the PACU for 2 to 3 hours before you are taken to your room. Your family will be able to see you as soon as you are settled back in your hospital room.

Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu.