Prepare Your Home for Your Return after Total Joint Replacement

After your surgery, you will need some help in moving around safely and with activities like preparing food and getting to appointments. It is much easier to have this help planned and ready before you come to the hospital.

Plan for Help
Your family and friends play a very important role in your recovery. They can help you with:

- A ride home from the hospital
- Getting in and out of the car
- Activities such as cooking, bathing and exercising
- Getting into and out of bed
- Laundry and light housekeeping
- Getting to outpatient appointments
- Collecting your mail
- Care for loved ones or pets

Prepare Your Home

- Prepare a room with all the needed equipment, preferably on the first floor.
- Arrange your home in such a way to allow for safe walkways through your home.

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Learn more about your health care.
• Clear your floor of such things as foot stools, electrical cords and even small pets to avoid tripping.
• Take up scatter or throw rugs if you have them on the floors.
• Use a utility cart to carry items from place to place. Push it ahead of your walker. This can save you several trips.
• Rearrange your kitchen to have those items you need a lot at a reachable level.
• Shop for canned and frozen food and placing these items in reach between shoulder and waist level.

Purchase Adaptive Equipment
You will need several pieces of equipment to make your daily activities easier and safer. Since each person’s recovery may be different, your doctor will prescribe the equipment that best suits your needs.

Most of the equipment is not covered by insurance, but check with your insurance company to see what may be covered. You may be able to get some of the equipment from your local drug store or medical supply store. Your social worker or Patient Care Resource Manager (PCRM) will be able to help you with this.

Your therapist will teach you how to use some of the following equipment before you go home:

• **Bath seat / Shower bench**: This seat or bench allows you to sit for your safety while you are in the tub or shower.

• **Cushion**: Cushions are used to raise the seat height of a chair, couch, car or other surfaces.

• **Elevated toilet seat**: This device is attached to your toilet seat to raise its height.
- **Reacher:** A reacher is used to pick up items off the floor and to help you with dressing.

- **Dressing Stick:** This device has a hook on one end and a pusher on the other and is used to help put on pants, skirts, pull up zippers, etc.

- **Sock Aid:** This aid helps you safely put on your socks.

- **Long-handled shoe horn:** The shoe horn is attached to a long stick and allows you to put your shoes on while sitting or standing.

- **Elastic shoe laces:** These shoe laces makes it easier for you to slip in or out of your shoes.

- **Long-handled bath sponge:** This sponge helps you reach hard to reach areas while bathing.

- **Walker or Crutches:** These walking aids help you to be safe when you are up and about.

**Be Safe at Home**

- For hip and knee replacement patients:
  - Use an apron with several pockets or attach an apron to your walker to carry things.
  - Carry hot liquids in covered containers.
  - Slide objects along the counter top instead of carrying them.
For hip replacement patients only (posterior approach):
- Sit on a high stool when working at the counters.
- Do not sit in a low chair or sofa, or in swivel chairs.
- Use a reacher to reach objects on the floor or high in the cupboards. Do not bend down to pick things up.

Prepare for Discharge and Follow-Up Care

A social worker or PCRM will help arrange the support services you need to leave the hospital after surgery. This may include:
- Working with your physical therapist to determine what special equipment you may need.
- Helping to arrange physical therapy.
- Working with your doctor and nurse to make arrangements for home nursing support or other community services.
- Helping you address financial concerns about your care and treatment.

A follow up appointment with your doctor will be scheduled for you. At this visit, your doctor will check your new joint to be sure it is healing. Your progress will be followed by your doctor and your activity will be gradually increased.

If you have questions about your care, talk to your doctor, therapist or nurse.