



# Getting Ready for Knee Replacement Surgery



**CHRISTIANA CARE**  
HEALTH SYSTEM

Center for Advanced  
Joint Replacement





# Table of Contents

## Quality and Safety 1

Quality and Safety at Christiana Care .....	2
Awards and Honors.....	3

## Welcome 3

You're in Good Hands .....	4
The Right Support .....	5

## Our Program 5

Highlights of Our Program .....	5
The Care Coordinator Team .....	6
Your Discharge Plan.....	6

## Frequently Asked Questions 8

### Before Surgery 10

Before Surgery Checklist .....	11
What to do the Night Before Surgery .....	12
What to Bring to the Hospital .....	12

### At the Hospital 13

Day of Surgery .....	14
After Surgery .....	15
Post-Operative Day 1: Discharge Day for Most Patients .....	16
Post-Operative Day 2: Discharge Day for Some Patients .....	16

### Your Recovery 17

Exercising After Surgery .....	18
The Clinical Diary .....	20
Caring for Yourself at Home .....	21
Preventing Complications .....	21

### Conclusion 22

### Notes 23 & 24







# Quality and Safety

## Doctors and staff demonstrate their commitment to quality and safety every day.

### QUALITY AND SAFETY AT CHRISTIANA CARE

When you decide to have surgery, you want to know that you are in the best hands possible. Doctors and staff at Christiana Care Health System demonstrate their commitment to quality and safety every day. Below are some of the ways we are taking the lead in these areas:

- To reinforce a culture focused on patient safety, staff receive extra training, technology and resources to improve patient care. The result: a decrease in the number and rate of medical errors and costs savings of more than \$55 million.
- The Good Catch Program is a voluntary reporting system that prevents harm by identifying unsafe conditions before they affect patients, employees or visitors.
- Christiana Care continues to reduce cases of preventable harm, such as hospital-acquired infections, medication safety, patient falls, pressure ulcers and complications. Since 2010, preventable harm has been reduced by 66 percent, with more than 5,700 fewer patients experiencing harm during their hospitalizations.
- Christiana Care's Language Services team has expanded the spectrum of services available to improve safety for patients who speak limited English or are deaf.
- More than 94% of employees received the flu vaccine, placing Christiana Care among the top performers nationally.





## Awards and Honors

- Since 2011, the Center for Advanced Joint Replacement has earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval for quality for hip and knee replacements.
- Since 2010, the Center for Advanced Joint Replacement has received Magnet Recognition by the American Nurses Credentialing Center.
- U.S. News & World Report ranked Christiana Care #1 in Delaware and #3 in the Philadelphia region. The magazine also rated Christiana Care as a high-performing hospital in 10 specialties, including orthopaedics.
- Truven Analytics named Christiana Care to its 100 Top Hospitals list. We are also one of only 17 hospitals across the nation to earn the 100 Top Hospitals Everest Award for setting national benchmarks for the fastest long-term improvement among health systems over the last five years.
- Christiana and Wilmington Hospitals received a grade of "A" from the Leapfrog Group for patient safety. The Leapfrog Group assigns grades A through F to more than 2,500 hospitals across the nation based on their ability to prevent errors, accidents, injuries and infections.
- The American College of Surgeons awarded Christiana Care a "meritorious" rating for its outcomes in surgical patient care. Christiana Care is one of only 44 institutions out of 445 to achieve this honor.
- For the fourth consecutive year, Christiana Care earned Training Magazine's Top 125 Training Excellence Award. Christiana Care placed in the top 50 on the list of all industries and in the top 10 of health care organizations.

Each year, Christiana Care sets ambitious goals for improving quality and safety, and we are proud to say that we are making great leaps forward in these areas. We do this through our steadfast commitment to being respectful, expert, caring partners in our patients' health -- it's The Christiana Care Way, and it keeps our focus where it belongs: on our neighbors who put their trust in us.





Welcome

**Thank you for choosing the  
*Christiana Care Center for Advanced Joint Replacement*  
for your knee replacement surgery.**

Our team is committed to preparing you for the procedure ahead. Our program was built on teamwork and communication, with you being the focus. This patient guide will provide important information for you before admission and what to expect during your hospital stay and as you recover. Our team strongly encourages you to read this information prior to attending your education session. We will be glad to answer any questions you have, so please bring your questions and a support person to the session.

Your education session: \_\_\_\_\_

Your surgery date: \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival time on day of surgery: \_\_\_\_\_

Please bring this information booklet with you to:

- The hospital on admission.
- All physical therapy visits after hospital discharge.

**YOU'RE IN GOOD HANDS**

The Christiana Care Center for Advanced Joint Replacement performs more joint replacements each year than any other health system in the region, including the leading Philadelphia hospital. Our care for each patient follows The Christiana Care Way, meaning that each member of your medical team becomes a partner in your health. We are here to help you make a complete recovery so you can get back to your life as quickly as possible. If there is something you need or do not understand, just ask!

To learn more, visit: [www.christianacare.org/joint](http://www.christianacare.org/joint)

**THE RIGHT SUPPORT**

Your clinical team is available to help you throughout your recovery. In addition, you will also need a reliable family member or friend who can provide support to you before and after your surgery. Whoever you choose should be a steady presence who will provide the physical and emotional support you need to make a speedy recovery. We will coach that person on the best ways to help you.





# “THEIR GOAL IS TO ENSURE THAT YOU RECEIVE THE BEST CARE!”

An experienced, skilled surgeon is one of the most important components of a successful joint replacement. But a well-designed program staffed by a team that specializes in joint replacement surgery can make a big impact on your recovery, your comfort and your peace of mind.

The Center for Advanced Joint Replacement benefits from a talented staff that understands the special needs of joint replacement patients. We care for more than 2,500 joint replacement patients each year. From beginning to end, our goal is to ensure that you receive the best care, and that your joint replacement surgery is a positive experience.





# Our Program

## HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR PROGRAM

The Christiana Care Center for Advanced Joint Replacement has dedicated patient care units located within Christiana and Wilmington Hospitals. For your comfort, each unit offers private rooms with Internet access. In addition, the program includes:

- A care coordinator team that organizes all pre-operative and discharge planning.
- A pre-operative education session.
- Nurses who dedicate themselves to the care of joint replacement patients.
- Physical therapists who help get you moving again: from getting out of bed to climbing stairs.
- Group physical therapy sessions.
- Personal care assistance.
- Occupational therapists who make sure you can care for yourself.
- Coaching for family and friends who will participate in your recovery. We will teach them how to help you.
- A personalized treatment plan for you to follow when you leave the hospital.
- A clinical diary that will be used to track your progress.

## THE CARE COORDINATOR TEAM

The Center for Advanced Joint Replacement's care coordinator team will be responsible for your care needs from the pre-operative course through discharge. You probably already heard from someone on the team after you were scheduled for surgery. Once you are admitted to the hospital for your surgery, a care coordinator will help you with any needs you have during your stay with us.

The care coordinator team's responsibilities include:

- Coordinating your care before surgery between your doctors' offices, the hospital and any testing, if needed.
- Giving instructions for any additional clearances required for surgery.
- Obtaining your current medication list.
- Taking your medical history by phone prior to your surgery date.
- Arranging for you and your support person to attend a pre-operative education session.
- Confirming who will be assisting you at home after discharge from the hospital.
- Arranging medical equipment for your home upon discharge.
- Coordinating your hospital care with the other team members.
- Working with your insurance provider to get answers to insurance questions.



## YOUR DISCHARGE PLAN

In most cases, our surgeons strongly encourage patients to recover in their own homes, with the support of family and friends. We find that most people are happy to return to their homes right away and are fully capable of recovering there.

Prior to admission, a care coordinator will inquire about your plan for care upon discharge. Options include:

- Home with outpatient physical therapy.
- Home with physical therapy in your home.
- Discharge to a skilled nursing home with physical therapy.

Once you are admitted to the hospital, your care coordinator will:

- Confirm your discharge plan.
- Address the need for any additional equipment prior to discharge.
- Communicate the discharge plan to the clinical team.
- Confirm outpatient physical therapy or at-home physical therapy appointments, whichever is appropriate.



### REACHING A CARE COORDINATOR

The Care Coordinator Office is open Monday through Friday between 7:30 a.m. and 4 p.m. You may call any time to ask questions or discuss concerns about your surgery. If your care coordinator is unavailable, you may leave a message for a return telephone call.

#### CARE COORDINATOR PHONE NUMBERS:

Care Coordinator Office for Wilmington Hospital patients:

Phone: 302-320-2460 Fax: 302-320-4644

Care Coordinator Office for Christiana Hospital patients:

Phone: 302-320-2460 Fax: 302-320-4644



# Frequently Asked Questions

**You probably have many questions about your surgery and recovery process.**

We've answered some of them below. If you have others, please ask your care coordinator, surgeon or other team member.

### **How do I make arrangements for surgery?**

Your surgeon will schedule your surgery.

### **What happens after my surgery is scheduled?**

Once you have a surgery date, someone from the care coordinator office will contact you to help you get ready for your surgery date. Once you are admitted to the hospital, a care coordinator will guide you through the program.

### **How long will I be in the hospital?**

Most patients will be in the hospital for one day after surgery. Some may require a longer stay.

### **Will I need help at home?**

Yes. For the first several days or perhaps weeks, you will need someone to help you make meals, drive, keep house, etc. If you live alone, we recommend having your support person stay with you around the clock for at least the first three days when you go home. If your support person cannot stay with you, he or she should be prepared to check on you four to five times a day for the first three days.

### **How can I get my home ready before surgery?**

Getting ready ahead of time can make things easier for you when you go home. For example, have the laundry done, house cleaned, yard work completed, bed linens changed, and meals prepared. Evaluate your environment for safety. Take up throw rugs, clear hallways to make room for a walker, and make sure you have adequate lighting. If there are any stairs in your home that don't have handrails, consider having them installed. Arrange an area in your home with a chair with arms and a footrest to extend your legs.

### **Will I need other supplies?**

Depending on your progress after knee replacement surgery, you may need a high toilet seat and a shower chair. These items are rarely covered by insurance. Consider installing grab bars in your tub or shower.

An Occupational Therapist (OT) will visit you during your hospital stay. He or she will ask about your ability to dress and bath yourself and will offer suggestions and tools, if necessary, to make you more independent. The OT will also ask about your options for showering at home and discuss solutions to keep you safe.





### **When will I be able to get out of bed following surgery?**

Your surgeon will ask that you get out of bed the day of your surgery. Once you meet the program's safety protocol, staff will help you get you up with a walker. You will walk with a walker and continue with help from our staff. To reduce the chance of falling, we do not want you to walk without staff present. This will be discussed in detail during your education session and during your hospital stay.

### **How long does the surgery take?**

Actual surgery time is an hour to an hour and a half. The entire process takes three to four hours.

### **Will I have pain after surgery?**

Yes, but the level of pain and discomfort varies with each patient. We will provide pain medications to keep you comfortable while in the hospital.

### **Will I need a walker?**

Yes. You will use a walker during your hospital stay and will continue to use it after discharge. If you need a walker at the time of discharge, your care coordinator will order one and have it delivered to the hospital. Your physical therapist will make sure it is adjusted to your height.

### **Where will I go after the hospital?**

Most patients go home and continue physical therapy at an outpatient office or at home. A small number of patients may need a short inpatient stay at a nursing home. Check with your insurance company to understand your rehabilitation benefits.

### **Will I need physical therapy when I go home?**

Yes. Physical therapy will continue after you go home, either with a physical therapist at an outpatient physical therapy office or in-home therapy as prescribed by your surgeon. The length of time needed varies with each patient.

### **When can I take a shower?**

Your surgeon or physician assistant will include showering information with your discharge instructions.

### **How long until I can drive and get back to normal?**

Being able to drive depends on whether surgery was on your right or left side and the kind of car you drive. Recovery time varies with each patient and getting "back to normal" will depend on your individual progress. Talk with your surgeon or physician assistant to get his or her advice. You should not drive if you are taking narcotic pain medication.

### **When can I have sexual intercourse?**

There is no set time to resume sexual intercourse. You should discuss any mobility precautions related to your joint replacement with your surgeon, who will assess your progress and give you clearance when the time is right.

### **When will I be able to get back to work?**

We recommend that most people take at least one month off from work, even if your job allows you to sit often. More strenuous jobs will need a longer absence from work.

### **How often will I need to be seen by my doctor following the surgery?**

Depending on your doctor, you will be seen within the first few weeks after going home. The nursing staff will provide you with this information while reviewing your discharge instructions.







## Before Surgery

To ensure that things go smoothly for you on the day of your surgery and beyond, we want to help you prepare in advance.



**The following checklists will tell you all the things  
you need to do before your surgery.  
Double- and even triple-check that you have completed  
all of the items to avoid any surprises  
when you get to the hospital.**

## **BEFORE SURGERY CHECKLIST**

### **Pre-Register**

After your surgery has been scheduled, the Admissions Department will call you to gather your pre-registration information by phone.

### **Obtain Pre-Admission Tests**

- After you have been scheduled for surgery, you will receive a laboratory testing order sheet from your surgeon.
- Have your testing done at a lab approved by your insurance company within 30 days of your surgery date but at least seven days prior to surgery so results can be reviewed. Have the results faxed to the Center for Advanced Joint Replacement at 302-320-4644. Call 302-320-2460 if you have any questions.
- Pre-admission testing is available at Christiana Care. Testing areas are located at both Wilmington and Christiana Hospitals. No appointment is needed.
- **Lab Services at Christiana Hospital Campus**  
Weekday hours 6 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Christiana Care Medical Arts Pavilion 1  
Suite 100, 4745 Ogletown-Stanton Road  
Newark, DE 19713  
302-733-6244
- **Lab Services at Wilmington Hospital**  
The lab is located inside the main entrance of Wilmington Hospital.  
Weekday hours 7 a.m.-4:45 p.m.  
501 West 14th Street  
Wilmington, DE 19801  
302-320-6801

### **Choose Your Support Person**

Your support person is a family member or friend who will help you when you go home. We recommend that your support person stay with you in your home for the first three days around the clock after you are discharged from the hospital.

### **Copy Your Advance Directive**

An advanced directive is a legal document that allows you to make decisions about end-of-life care. If you have an advance directive, please bring a copy with you to the hospital on the day of your surgery.

### **See a Dentist (optional)**

If you are not up-to-date with your regular check-ups, we recommend that you see your dentist and have any needed dental work completed before your surgery.

### **Register for a Joint Replacement Information Session**

An information session is held for patients scheduled for joint surgery. We will schedule this session with you before your surgery. Members of our team will be there to answer your questions. It is strongly suggested that you bring your support person with you to class. Call the Care Coordinator Office at 302-320-2460 to schedule your session.

### **Stop Medications that Increase Bleeding**

Five days before surgery, stop anti-inflammatory medications that you are taking for pain, such as Motrin, Naproxen, Advil, aspirin, etc. These medications may cause bleeding. Talk to your doctor about other medications you can take for pain that do not cause bleeding.

## **IMPORTANT**

If you are on Coumadin, Plavix, Xarelto, Pradaxa, Eliquis, aspirin or other blood thinners, you will need special instructions from the doctor who prescribed this medication before you can stop taking them. Do not stop taking these medications without medical direction. A care coordinator will talk to you about managing your other medications prior to surgery.

**For your convenience,  
a wireless network is available and the  
“Get Well Network” is in each patient’s room, allowing  
Internet access from your bedside.**

**Find Out Your Arrival Time**

If you are unsure when to arrive at the hospital, call your surgeon’s office.

**Understand Visiting Guidelines**

Our visitor guidelines are flexible to meet everyone’s needs and promote safe and healthy healing for our patients. Visitors are allowed anytime, as long as they follow these guidelines:

- Children under the age of 12 may visit but must be with an adult, other than the patient, at all times.
- You are allowed one overnight guest in your room. Guests must be able to care for themselves and must register with security at 9 p.m.
- You and your visitors must observe quiet hours from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. daily.

**WHAT TO DO THE NIGHT BEFORE SURGERY**

- Do not eat or drink anything after midnight unless otherwise instructed to do so.
- If you are told to take any medications by mouth the day of surgery, you may do so with a sip of water.
- Change the sheets on your bed.
- Clean the joint site with 2% Chlorhexidine Gluconate cloths once the evening before surgery and once in the morning before coming to the hospital. Cloths are given out in the pre-education class or mailed to your home.

**What to Bring to the Hospital**

Following is a list of items you must bring with you to the hospital:

- Picture ID.
- Copy of your advance directive or living will (if you have one).
- Your information booklet and your bag.
- Personal hygiene items (toothbrush, deodorant, hand mirror, etc.).
- CPAP or BiPap Equipment (if you have been instructed to use at home).
- Several days of loose fitting clothing: drawstring or elastic waist shorts, loose-fitting, short-sleeved t-shirts (avoid long-sleeved shirts).
- Button-down or zip-up fleece or cardigan sweater.
- Night clothes for sleeping (you can wear a hospital gown at bedtime).
- Sneakers or flat-soled rubber shoes and socks; avoid flip flops and clogs.

Please do not bring the following items to the hospital:

- Medications, unless directed by the care coordinator.
- Valuables such as wallets, pocketbooks, jewelry, large sums of money.

You may bring technology items, such as laptops and tablets, to the hospital, but Christiana Care is not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen items. A wireless network is available and the “Get Well Network” is in each patient’s room, allowing Internet access from your bedside.



# “TIME TO TAKE ACTION”

Andrew Doorey, M.D., is one of Delaware’s best-known cardiologists. “I didn’t want to take time away from my patients,” he says. As a registered pilot, he also knew he would not be able to fly while recovering from surgery.

For years, he wore a knee brace. He received injections. But when the problem started to impact his tennis game and he was limping around the cath lab and hospital, he decided he’d had enough.

*“But after researching the options for knee replacement, it took me about three seconds to decide to have it done at the Center for Advanced Joint Replacement.”*





# At the Hospital

## The Day of Surgery

When your surgery date finally arrives, it will go more smoothly for you and your visitors if you know what to expect. Please review the following information, and share it with your support person and anyone who will be visiting you in the hospital.

### CHRISTIANA HOSPITAL

#### Parking at Christiana Hospital

Parking at Christiana Hospital is free in the visitor parking areas. Valet parking is also available at the main entrance. Patients with handicapped vehicles may use valet parking for free.

#### Directions to the Surgical Area

On the day of surgery, enter Christiana Hospital at the main entrance. Stop at the information desk in the main lobby for directions to the Surgical Admission Suite.

#### What to Expect at Christiana Hospital

In the Surgical Admission Suite, you will get ready for surgery and change into a hospital gown. You will then be taken to the operating room holding area. While in this area, a nurse will start an IV and scrub your joint site. Your operating room nurse as well as your anesthesiologist will keep you informed about when your surgery will begin.

Family members will be directed to the surgical waiting room area. If they choose to leave the waiting room, they must let the attendant know where to find them. Your surgeon will inform them when the surgery is over and give them an update on your condition. If your family is not present and you would like the surgeon to call them, please have the contact number available when you arrive at the hospital.

### WILMINGTON HOSPITAL

#### Parking at Wilmington Hospital

Garage parking is available; follow the signs to visitor parking. During early morning hours an attendant will assist with the entrance into the garage. Valet parking is also available at the main entrance for a fee. Patients with handicapped vehicles may use valet parking for free.

#### Directions to the Surgical Area

On the day of surgery, enter Wilmington Hospital at the main entrance. Take the south elevators to the 3rd floor, exit the elevators to the right and check in at the surgical waiting room on the left.

#### What to Expect at Wilmington Hospital

In the Prep & Holding area, staff will prepare you for surgery. You will change into a hospital gown, and a nurse will start an IV and scrub your skin at the joint site. The nurses and anesthesiologist will keep you informed about when your surgery will begin.

Your family and friends can wait in the waiting room on the 7th floor while you are in surgery. If they choose to leave the waiting room, they must let the attendant know where to find them. Your surgeon will inform them when the surgery is over and give them an update on your condition. If your family is not present and you would like the surgeon to call them, please have a contact number available when you arrive at the hospital.



# About the Hospitals

## CHRISTIANA HOSPITAL

**Visiting Hours:** Open

### Overnight Guests:

One person can spend the night in your room.  
He or she must check in at security at 9 p.m.

**Quiet Hours:** 9 p.m. - 6 a.m.

### West End Cafe (lobby level)

6:30 a.m. - 10 a.m.

10:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. (hot entrée & pizza closes at 1:30 p.m.)

4 p.m. - 7 p.m.

11 p.m. - 3 a.m.

### Au Bon Pain (lobby level)

Monday - Friday, 6 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Saturday - Sunday, 6 a.m. - 6 p.m.

### Brew Ha Ha

Coffee shop with locations inside the main entrance  
and in the E Tower near the Center for  
Health & Vascular Health entrance.

### Glass Box Gift Shop (Main Lobby)

Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Saturday - Sunday, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

## WILMINGTON HOSPITAL

**Visiting Hours:** Open

### Overnight Guests:

One person can spend the night in your room.  
He or she must check in at security at 9 p.m.

**Quiet Hours:** 9 p.m. - 6 a.m.

### Overlook Café (ground floor near the North Elevators)

6:30 – 9:00 a.m. (hot breakfast served)

9:00 – 10:30 a.m. (grill closed)

11:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. (hot lunch served)

3:00 – 4:30 p.m. (grill closed)

5:00 – 6:30 p.m. (hot dinner served)

Closed Saturday and Sunday.

### Au Bon Pain (lobby level):

Monday - Friday, 6 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Saturday - Sunday, 6 a.m. - 6 p.m.

### The Window Box Gift Shop (Main Lobby)

Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Saturday, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Sunday, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

## AFTER SURGERY

Following your surgery, you will go to a recovery area for a brief stay. Next you will move to your room. The majority of patients get up and walk the day of surgery following a physical therapy or nursing evaluation. A physical therapist and/or nurse will demonstrate and explain post-operative exercises to start following your surgery to reduce the possibility of blood clots forming in your legs.

### Keeping You Comfortable

Pain medication is available to you throughout your stay. Your nurse will ask you to rate your pain on a scale of 0-10, with "0" being no pain or discomfort and "10" being the worst pain possible. Our goal is to keep you at a tolerable pain level.

It is important that you understand medication side effects, especially for the new medications that you start while you are in the hospital. We offer side effects resources for you to review while in the hospital; please do so consistently.

A small number of patients may experience anesthesia side effects. The most common side effects are the inability to pass urine, nausea and vomiting. Should you experience any of these side effects, we will manage your symptoms as you recover.

### Medication Side Effects

You may be prescribed medicine after joint replacement surgery. Below are some of the common side effects:

#### Pain medication:

- Dizziness.
- Constipation.
- Nausea.
- Drowsiness.
- Dry mouth.

#### Blood thinners:

- Easy bruising.
- Bleeding.
- Soft stools.
- Loose stools.
- Abdominal cramping.



## KEEPING YOU SAFE

To ensure your safety following surgery, we do not want you to walk without staff present. Please do not allow your support person or anyone else to move you during your stay. However, we encourage them to learn how to help you by joining you during physical therapy and receiving demonstrations from the nursing staff. This will help them to feel comfortable when taking you home.

### POST-OPERATIVE DAY 1 - DISCHARGE DAY FOR MOST PATIENTS

The morning after surgery, hospital staff will help you with bathing and dressing. A physical therapy one-on-one evaluation or your first group physical therapy session will take place. The physical therapist will check your progress and teach you how to walk with a walker. Nurses will ask you frequently about your need for pain medication.

After lunch, you will have another physical therapy session in a group setting. We find that most patients enjoy being with others who have had the same surgery. In addition, the sessions may even help you reach your goals faster. We encourage your support person to take part in physical therapy sessions as much as possible. Other visitors are welcome before and after therapy sessions.

Most patients are discharged after their second therapy session the day after surgery. If the plan is for you to be discharged on this day, an occupational therapist will evaluate you at the bedside and make recommendations for bathing, dressing and any adaptive equipment you will need. Your nurse and physical therapist will also give you detailed discharge instructions before you leave. For patients leaving the day after surgery, these instructions will cover pain management, use of ice and leg elevation.

Regardless of when you are discharged, we encourage you to have your support person or another family member or friend take part in the discharge process.

### POST-OPERATIVE DAY 2 - DISCHARGE DAY FOR SOME PATIENTS

On the second day after surgery, an occupational therapist (OT) will meet with you at your bedside to review suggestions for taking care of yourself after your joint replacement. The OT will make suggestions about getting dressed, bathing and/or showering, and safety tips for home during your recovery phase. Following breakfast, you will take part in your first morning group physical therapy session of the day.

After lunch, you will have your second afternoon therapy session. We encourage your support person to go to at least one physical therapy session on this day.

Many patients are ready for discharge after the second therapy session of the day. Your nurse and physical therapist will give you detailed instructions before you leave.

If you require an additional day or more at the hospital, your routine will be similar to previous days. You will have breakfast and then attend a morning physical therapy session. You usually will be discharged after this session, and your nurse and physical therapist will give you detailed instructions before you leave. If you are not being discharged, you will have lunch and then attend an afternoon physical therapy session.



# “THE STAFF IS SUPERB”

“They all have patient care, communication with the patient and patient education as such a strong focus. Each and every person who entered the room identified themselves, and I knew why they were there. Everything was well explained before it happened. I knew when they would be returning and why. I was made aware of discharge planning from the very beginning and all those plans fell into place efficiently and correctly. All members of the staff work together on the Joint Replacement Unit ... and the unit works superbly well. I can only say that we patients are very fortunate to have the Joint Replacement Center in Wilmington. It is the very best!”





# Your Recovery

## EXERCISING AFTER SURGERY

Exercise is of great value to get the best results from your joint replacement surgery. After you leave the hospital, you will need to continue your exercise program at an outpatient health site or at home as ordered by your surgeon.

We offer choices for your physical therapy (PT) once you leave the hospital. Outpatient PT care can be set up at many places including Christiana Care's outpatient locations. If you are not able to travel from your home, we can schedule PT sessions at your home through Christiana Care's Visiting Nurse Association or any other provider. Your care coordinator will firm up these plans before you leave the hospital.

No matter what you choose, exercise will support rapid healing and help you return to a more normal lifestyle. Please bring this booklet to all PT visits. These are the exercises you will do during group sessions. Instructions for the exercises are listed on the next few pages.

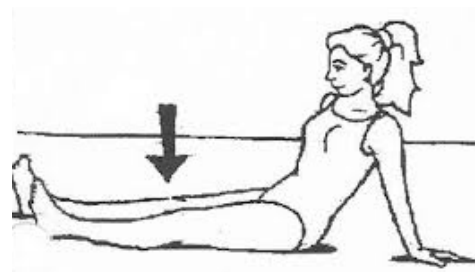
### KNEE EXERCISES

#### Ankle Pumps



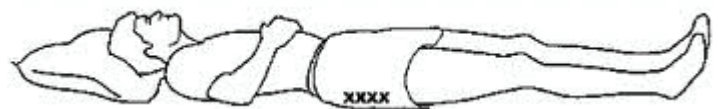
1. Bend your ankles up and down as if you are pumping the gas pedal.
2. 30 repetitions, 2 times per day.

#### Quad Sets



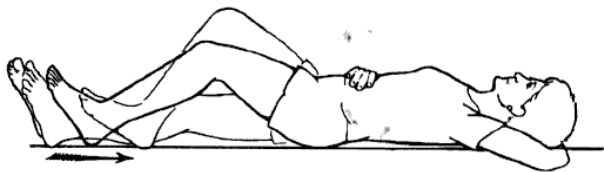
1. Sit reclined or lie in bed with legs straight.
2. Press the backs of your knees down. This will tighten the muscles on top of your thighs and straighten your knees.
3. Hold for 5 seconds.
4. 30 repetitions, 2 times per day.

#### Gluteal Sets



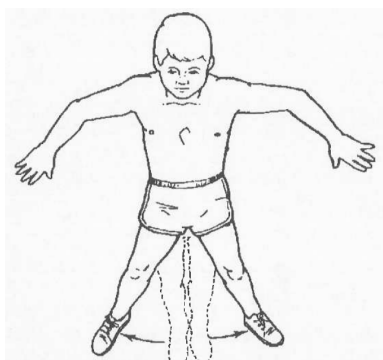
1. Squeeze your buttocks together as tightly as possible.
2. Hold for 5 seconds.
3. 30 repetitions, 2 times per day.

## Heel Slides



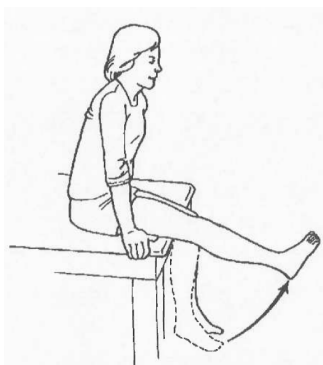
1. Lie on your back or in a reclined position.
2. Bend your surgical knee and slide your heel up toward your body as shown.
3. Hold for 1 second, slowly relax.
4. 30 repetitions, 2 times per day.

## Windshield Wipers



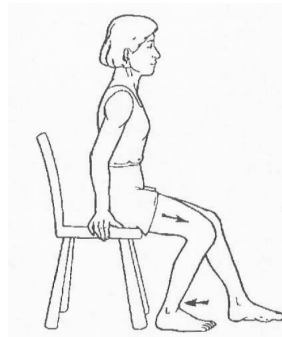
1. Lie on your back or in a reclined position.
2. Slide your legs out to the sides, keeping your toes pointing up toward the ceiling.
3. Bring your leg back to the starting position.
4. 30 repetitions, 2 times per day.

## Seated Knee Extension



1. Sit in a chair or on the bed with your thigh supported.
2. Straighten your knee fully.
3. Hold for 1 second, and slowly lower.
4. 30 repetitions, 2 times per day.

## Seated Knee Flexion Stretch



1. Sit on the front of a chair as picture above.
2. Bend your surgical knee and slide foot back toward the chair until you feel a stretch in the front of your knee.
3. Hold for 5 seconds.
4. 30 repetitions, 2 times per day.

## Seated Hamstring Stretch



1. Sit with your surgical leg propped as shown.
2. Relax, letting the leg straighten.
3. Hold for 10-15 minutes.
4. 1 repetition, 2 times per day.



# Christiana Care Outpatient Physical Therapy Facilities

You are welcome to use any outpatient facility that your insurance allows. If you would like other options besides those listed, please speak to your care coordinator. Some facilities, but not all, have van transportation to and from your home if a family member or friend is unable to bring you to your appointment. Facilities that have an \* after the name offer transportation. Please note that vans are not wheelchair accessible.

## **The HealthCare Center at Brandywine\***

1401 Foulk Road  
Wilmington, DE 19803  
302-477-4305

## **Concord Health Center**

161 Wilmington-West Chester Pike, Suite 2100  
Chadds Ford, PA 19317  
610-361-1195  
302-320-7610

## **The HealthCare Center at Christiana\***

200 Hygeia Drive  
Newark, DE 19713  
302-623-0390

## **Middletown CareCenter**

124 Sleepy Hollow Drive, Suite 101  
Middletown, DE 19709  
302-449-3050

## **Preventive Medicine & Rehabilitation Institute**

3506 Kennett Pike  
Wilmington, DE 19807  
302-661-3350

## **Springside Plaza**

Connor Building, Suite 101  
Newark, DE 19702  
302-838-4700

## **Stoney Batter\***

5311 Limestone Road, Suite 101  
Wilmington, DE 19808  
302-623-2650

## **Smyrna Health and Wellness Center**

100 S. Main Street, Suite 106  
Smyrna, DE 19801  
302-659-4500

## **Wilmington Hospital\***

501 West 14th Street, 6th Floor  
Wilmington, DE 19801  
302-320-6920

## THE CLINICAL DIARY

During the first three months after your surgery, you will see many health professionals. Your clinical diary will communicate important information to these professionals at a glance.

Your clinical team has created a treatment plan just for you. Recovery time varies with each patient, and your clinical diary is an important way for your team to track your progress as you work your plan. The diary will include notes about your recovery and will alert the team to anything that may be slowing your progress; they can then address such things so you can continue moving forward. Upon discharge from the Center for Advanced Joint Replacement, the physical therapist will record the following in your clinical diary:

- Your name.
- Your surgeon's name.
- Date of surgery.
- Diagnosis.
- Physical therapist's name.

- Discharge date.
- Knowledge of any precautions.
- Discharge functional status for bed mobility, transfers, gait and stairs.

After each visit with a physical therapist or any other health professional, he or she will add information to your diary to track your progress.

### **TO HEALTH PROFESSIONALS: REHAB/ SUBACUTE/HOME HEALTH/OUTPATIENT PT**

- Check all information in the clinical diary and document progress at least once a week.
- Include your name, agency or facility, and phone number.

## CARING FOR YOURSELF AT HOME

When you go home there are many things you need to know for your safety, healing and comfort. We've compiled important information for you to follow once you return home. If you have other questions, please speak to your care coordinator.

Below are some steps you can take to feel better faster and stay safe during your recovery:

- Control your pain; take your pain medicine at least 30 minutes before physical therapy.
- Do not drive or operate machinery while taking pain medication.
- Use ice throughout the day to decrease pain.
- Never place ice directly on your skin; use a clean hand towel or washcloth over your incision to protect your skin from excessive coolness.
- Stay active to decrease stiffness, improve healing and reduce the possibility of blood clots. While at home, plan on taking a short walk every hour during waking hours.

### Swelling

You may find swelling at the surgical incision and the surrounding areas. To prevent post-operative swelling, lie with your legs elevated on pillows above your heart two to three times a day. Continue doing your exercises and using ice as indicated above to decrease swelling.

### Constipation

Constipation is a common side effect of pain medication. Following are common stool softeners to try at home:

- Senna.
- Colace.
- Miralax.
- Milk of Magnesia.
- Magnesium Citrate.
- Dulcolax tablets.
- Dulcolax suppository.

### Caring for Your Incision

While you are in the hospital, your surgeon and nurse will provide discharge instructions that will include incision care and directions for bathing and showering. Always wash your hands before and after caring for your incision.

## PREVENTING COMPLICATIONS

### Blood Clots

Following surgery the flow of blood may slow, which can lead to a clot forming in the veins of your legs. (Note that a clot can occur in either leg, not just the leg that was operated on.) Taking blood thinners and increasing activity after surgery will reduce the risk of blood clots.

You can help to prevent blood clots from forming in your legs by doing the following:

- Knowing the signs and symptoms of blood clots:
  - Pain or tenderness.
  - Discoloration of the skin.
  - Swelling or tightness of the calf.
- Continuing to do post-operative exercises: ankle pumps, quad and gluteal sets.
- Walking and increasing activity.
- Drinking plenty of fluids.
- Taking blood thinners as ordered by your surgeon (such as Lovenox, Aspirin or Coumadin).

In rare instances, a blood clot in your leg can lead to a more serious problem called pulmonary embolus, which is a blood clot that breaks free of a vein in the leg and moves to the lung, blocking blood flow. Signs of a pulmonary embolus include:

- Shortness of breath.
- Fast Breathing.
- Fast heart rate.
- Chest pain.
- Cough that may or may not include blood.
- Restlessness, anxiety.
- Fainting or near fainting episode.
- Fever.

If you are experiencing signs of a blood clot, please call your doctor. Call 911 if you are experiencing signs of a pulmonary embolism.

Information obtained from practice points: thromboembolic disease. National Association of Orthopaedic Nurses, (2015).

Please follow your discharge instructions at all times. Doing so will help reduce your risk of complications. If you require dental care after your surgery, talk with your surgeon about the use of antibiotics when visiting the dentist.



# Conclusion

## Joint replacement surgery is very common.

Each year the team at the Christiana Care Center for Advanced Joint Replacement performs more than 2,500 surgeries — more than any other hospital in the region. We have every reason to expect that you will experience a very good result from this surgery.

To put you on the best path, we will create a treatment plan just for you. The pace at which you recover largely depends on how well you stick to this plan. Remember that you are an active participant in your recovery. We encourage your friends and family to take an active role in helping you heal as well.

We look forward to helping you fully recover and return to your life — newly pain-free and able to do the things you love to do. Please let us know how we may further assist you in your recovery.















## CHRISTIANA CARE HEALTH SYSTEM

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P.O. Box 1668  
Wilmington, DE 19899  
302-733-1000

*[christianacare.org/joint](http://christianacare.org/joint)*



*Christiana Care is a private, not-for-profit regional health care system that relies in part on the generosity of individuals, foundations and corporations to fulfill its mission. To learn more about our mission, please visit [christianacare.org/donors](http://christianacare.org/donors).*