

Checklist for knee replacement surgery



You have decided to have an artificial knee replacement. This checklist is designed to help you when you talk to your specialist before the operation.

Make sure you've really understood what the operation involves, what the risks are, and what the subsequent treatment will entail by asking your specialist as many questions as you need to and summarising the answers in your own words.

General questions

- Can you describe for me the structure of the natural knee joint?
- What is a partial knee replacement?
A total knee replacement?
 - What are the pros and cons of these different knee replacements?
 - Is there a risk the implant will be rejected?
 - How long will it take to fit the implant and for the body to get used to it?
- What has experience with knee replacements been to date?

Your notes on the answers

Questions on the need for surgery

- Why are you recommending I have a knee replacement?
- What type of implant do you propose?
 - How long will this type of implant last? What has your experience been with this type of implant?
- Are there alternative treatment methods in my particular case?
 - If so, what?

Your notes on the answers

Questions on preparing for the operation

- **What's the best way to prepare for a total or partial knee replacement?**
 - What preparations will you yourself be making in the run-up to the operation?
 - Do you clarify potential infection sites before the operation?
 - What can I do myself to make sure I'm as well prepared for the operation as possible?
 - How will being overweight affect the new knee joint?

- **Will a doctor (anaesthetist) discuss the type of anaesthetic with me before the operation and tell me what type of anaesthetic will be used?**

- **Further questions for the anaesthetist:**
 - What types of anaesthetic are there, and what are the differences?
 - What are the risks and advantages of the various types of anaesthetic?
 - Will the medication I am on presently have any effect on the anaesthetic? How will it affect it?

Your notes on the answers

Questions on the operation

- **What surgical techniques are available?**
 - What technique will you be using?
 - How long will the operation to replace the knee take?
 - What are the pros and cons of your chosen technique?
 - What influence will your technique have on the healing process?
 - How many times, and how frequently, have you used this technique?

- **Will you occlude the blood flow during the operation? For how long?**

- **What are the risks involved in occluding the blood flow?**

- **What are the risks involved in a partial or total knee replacement operation?**

- **What are the most frequent complications?**

- **How great is the risk of infection with this operation?**

- **How could any existing conditions I may have affect the operation and the healing process?**
 - Will the medication I am on presently have any effect on the operation? How will it affect it?

Your notes on the answers

Questions on follow-up treatment

Your notes on the answers

- **What will my follow-up treatment involve directly after the operation?**
 - What are the risks in the first few days after the operation?
 - What do I have to look out for or take care of?
 - Is there any danger of thrombosis? What are the prophylactic measures?
 - How long after the operation will I be able to start standing?
 - At what point will I be able to put my full weight on the knee that's been operated on?

- **What can I do to make sure the follow-up treatment is as effective as possible?**

- **How long will I have to stay in hospital after the operation?**

- **What will my follow-up treatment involve once I've left hospital?**

Questions on going back to work

Your notes on the answers

- **When will I be able to go back to work part time?**

- **When will I be able to go back to work full time?**

Questions on sports and exercise

Your notes on the answers

- **What sports or forms of exercise will be suitable for me following my operation?**
 - What are the risks of doing specific types of sport?
 - What should I take particular care to do or avoid doing if I do these sports?

- **When will I be able to drive a car again (automatic or manual)?**