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What to Expect in your Total Joint Replacement Surgery: Preparation Guide

This guide is designed to help you prepare for your total joint replacement surgery. It's a big step that can impact your daily routine, work, and social life. However, with careful planning and teamwork, we can reduce your discomfort, minimize any inconvenience, and improve your overall recovery.

We believe that **successful surgery is a team effort**, involving you and your healthcare providers. For your part, **knowledge is key**. The more you know about what to expect, the smoother your journey will be. Please take the time to review all the materials in your folder to prepare yourself fully.

A. Understanding the Procedure

Before diving into the rest of this guide, it's important to:

- Understand the surgery itself, including the process, potential risks, and complications.
- Learn about the expected outcomes.
- Familiarize yourself with common terms used in this context.

Being informed will help you approach the surgery with confidence and realistic expectations.

B. What Happens After Your Initial Consultation

If you decide to proceed with your joint replacement surgery, you'll need to carefully review the materials in your Personal Orthopaedic Folder. While waiting for your surgery date, you should start preparing to ensure your body is in the best possible condition for the procedure. Key areas of preparation include:

1. **Pre-Operative Tests**
2. **Consultations with Specialists (if needed)**
3. **Adjustments to Regular Medications (Preoperative Medical and Surgical History Questionnaire)**
4. **Planning for the Recovery Period (Home Health Care Checklist)**
5. **Prehabilitation (Comprehensive Prehabilitation Program for Total Knee Replacement)**
6. **Mental Preparation**

1. Pre-Operative Tests

We will arrange basic tests (blood tests, chest X-ray, and ECG) about two weeks before surgery. You'll receive instructions during your pre-op visit on how to forward your results to us via the NowServing/SeriousMD app.

If you're at higher risk due to medical conditions, additional tests may be required. These tests are also best done about two weeks before surgery. These screenings help us address any concerns, such as abnormal blood results or undiagnosed conditions, and treat potential issues like urinary tract infections to lower the risk of complications.

It's possible that some tests will be repeated on the day of your admission to the hospital.

2. Pre-Operative Consultations with Specialists

Not all patients need a pre-op consultation with an anesthesiologist or cardiologist, but if I have concerns about your medical history, I'll arrange it for you. These consultations allow us to manage any risks during surgery.

During these appointments, it's important to:

- Discuss all your medical conditions.
- Provide an updated list of your current medications.

3. Adjustments to Regular Medications

Some medications must be paused or adjusted before surgery. Here are the key ones:

- **Blood Thinners:**
 - Medications like Warfarin and Clopidogrel should be stopped at least one week before surgery.
 - In some cases, you may need to switch to a different blood thinner (e.g., Aspirin or low-molecular-weight heparin).
 - If you're on any blood thinners, let me know at least two weeks before surgery so we can make the necessary adjustments.
- **Anti-Rheumatic Drugs:**
 - These medications can weaken the immune system, increasing the risk of infection and slow wound healing.
 - Some may need to be stopped well in advance (up to two months before surgery).
 - I'll coordinate with your rheumatologist to adjust your treatment plan and manage any potential arthritis flare-ups.
- **Supplements (e.g., Fish Oil, Glucosamine):**
 - These should also be stopped about one week before surgery, though this isn't always mandatory.

4. Planning for the Recovery Period

Take time to prepare your home for when you return after surgery. Consider these tips:

- Install ramps if stairs are difficult to manage.
- Add handrails in the bathroom for easier access.
- Arrange for family or friends to help with meals and household tasks.

It's also a good idea to maintain your fitness by doing low-impact exercises, such as swimming, cycling on a stationary bike, or light aerobics.

If you think you'll need additional support after surgery, such as a short stay at a rehabilitation facility, please let me know so I can assist with arrangements. For more info, please read the provided document *Home Healthcare Checklist for Total Knee Replacement Patients*.

5. Prehabilitation

Doing specific exercises before surgery can help strengthen your body and speed up your recovery afterward. You'll receive guidance on what exercises to do and how to perform them safely. You can avail a specific program with our partner Physiotherapy/rehab clinic (Physioworks Rehab and Physiotherapy). Please read the provided document: (*Comprehensive Prehabilitation Program for Total Knee Replacement*)

6. Mental Preparation

Surgery is a significant life event. Just as I prepare mentally for every procedure by reviewing your medical records and imaging in detail, it's equally important for you to prepare mentally.

- Understand that recovery takes time and effort, particularly during post-op rehabilitation.
- Adopt a positive mindset and commit to the rehab process, as this is often the hardest part of the journey.
- Remember, I'll be with you every step of the way.

If you're still unsure about moving forward with surgery, take more time to review the materials provided and feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

C. The Day Before Surgery: Hospital Admission

You'll check in at the hospital the afternoon before your surgery. Every effort will be made to secure a private room for you, although availability cannot always be guaranteed on the first day.

Here's what you'll need to bring:

- Identification (e.g., government ID, PhilHealth ID, or Senior Citizen ID)
- A list of your medications and allergies
- Information about previous hospitalizations and surgeries
- Completed pre-op questionnaires and test results

During your admission, you'll meet key members of the healthcare team, including:

- A consultant physician specializing in peri-operative care.
- The anesthesiologist, who will explain the anesthesia process.
- Physiotherapists, who will guide your post-op recovery plan.

Your assigned nurse will explain your care pathway, which outlines every step of your hospital stay to ensure all aspects of your care are covered.

D. Surgery Day

On the day of surgery:

- Follow fasting instructions provided by the hospital staff.
- Shower twice with an antibacterial solution to reduce the risk of infection.
- Pre-op medications will help you relax.

The surgery team is highly experienced, and everyone will work to ensure your comfort and safety throughout the procedure.

E. Post-Surgery Recovery

After surgery, the focus shifts to managing pain, preventing complications, and beginning your rehabilitation:

- **Pain Management:** Local anesthesia and oral pain relief will keep you comfortable.
- **Mobility:** You'll start walking with assistance (usually the same day).
- **Wound Care:** Surgical drains and blood thinners will be used to manage healing and reduce clotting risks.

Each day, your progress will be assessed, and your care plan may be adjusted based on your individual needs.

F. Discharge and Follow-Up

Most patients are ready to leave the hospital 4–6 days after surgery, but your discharge will depend on your mobility, home support, and readiness for independent living. Before you're discharged, you'll need to demonstrate that you can:

1. Get in and out of bed.
2. Shower independently.
3. Walk and manage stairs safely.
4. Bend your knee close to 90°.

Before leaving, make sure to review the **Post-Discharge Instructions and Postoperative Rehabilitation Guide** in your folder. Your first follow-up appointment will usually be two weeks after surgery.

This guide is meant to support you throughout the process. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact me or my team at **09171321286** or email me at **orthopodtec@gmail.com**. You can also visit www.tecorthopedics.com for additional resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lou Tec', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lou Mervyn Tec, MD DPBO FPOA
Orthopedic Surgery
Hand and Microvascular Surgery
Hips and Knees Preservation, Replacement and Revision