

# Before & After Surgery Education for **Joint Replacement**



 Rutland Regional  
Medical Center





A DEPARTMENT OF  
**RUTLAND REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER**

# Welcome

Dear Patient,

Thank you for choosing Rutland Regional Medical Center and Vermont Orthopaedic Clinic for your Surgery.

This book will guide you and:

1. Help prepare you for your surgery and hospital experience
2. Assist you in your recovery from joint replacement surgery
3. Prepare you for your recovery at home

This book is a general guide to recovery from joint replacement surgery. We understand that all patients do not have the same needs. As you prepare for joint replacement surgery, it is important for you to feel as comfortable as possible with your care.

It is your decision to have this surgery, and it is very important that you go into it feeling good about the surgery and your recovery. You can help achieve the best recovery from your surgery by being an active part of the care team before, during and after surgery. We hope and expect that you will continue to practice what the team has taught you long after you have left the hospital.

It is important that you and your home care helper(s) read this book carefully and refer to it during your recovery.

*Please bring this book with you to the hospital.*

Sincerely,

The Surgical Team

**To learn more about the Vermont Orthopaedic Clinic, please visit our website at:  
<https://www.rrmc.org/services/vermont-orthopaedic-clinic/>**





# Important Phone Numbers

<b>Advance Directive Assistance</b> .....	802.773.9888
<b>Financial Counselor</b> .....	802.747.1648
<b>Infection Prevention Nurse</b> .....	802.772.2408
<b>Occupational Therapy Department</b>	
Monday – Friday, 8am-4:30pm .....	802.747.1840
<b>Orthopaedic Clinical Liaison</b>	
Monday – Friday, 7am-3:30pm	
Cell phone.....	802.342.7559
<b>Pharmacist</b> .....	802.855.3584
<b>Physical Therapy Department</b>	
Monday – Friday, 8am-4:30pm .....	802.747.1840
<b>Pre-Op Assessment Nurse at Rutland Regional Medical Center</b>	
Monday – Friday, 8am-4:30pm .....	802.747.1741
<b>Prescription Refill – Vermont Orthopaedic Clinic</b> .....	802.775.2937
<b>Social Work Department</b> .....	802.747.3713
<b>Surgical Care Unit</b> .....	802.747.3728
<b>Vermont Orthopaedic Clinic – RN Surgical Scheduler</b>	
Monday – Friday, 8:30am-5pm .....	802.776.2208
.....	or 802.776.2254

## Benefits of Joint Replacement

Once your new joint is completely healed, you will reap the benefits of the surgery. These include:

- Reduced joint pain (*maybe no pain*)
- Easier movement and mobility
- Increased strength (*if you exercise*)
- Improved quality of life with the ability to return to normal activities
- Most likely, running, jumping, jogging or other high-impact activities will be discouraged.
- You can resume golf, dancing, walking, bicycling, swimming, skiing, hunting, fishing, gardening and other low-impact activities.

## Possible Risks and Complications with Joint Replacement

As with any major surgery, there are potential risks and complications. It is very important that you are informed of these before the surgery. Very rarely, complications may prove to be life threatening.

- Blood Clots
- Heart Attack
- Stroke
- Infection
- Pneumonia
- Fractures (*broken bones*)
- Continued discomfort
- Mechanical failure of the implant
- Stiffness
- Dislocation
- Nerve damage

*We will take every precaution to prevent complications at the time of surgery, but the risk is not zero.*

## Preparing for Surgery

**Joint Replacement surgery is not an emergency surgery.**

Preparing for a joint replacement begins several weeks before the actual surgery.

Before your surgery, many people will be asking about your insurance, medical history and discharge arrangements. You may feel that you are answering the same questions many times, but this redundancy is necessary. If you have everything written down, it will make the process smoother.

If you have not done so already, please complete the Patient Personal History Form that was mailed to you. This form includes all necessary information that will assist the healthcare team in caring for you.

When completed, please mail to us at the address below or bring it to your class.

Ambulatory Care Unit  
Rutland Regional Medical Center  
160 Allen Street  
Rutland, VT 05701

Your Healthcare Team will include:

### **Orthopaedic Surgeon**

who will perform the surgery and manage your overall treatment.

### **Physician's Assistant/Nurse Practitioner**

who will help your surgeon care for you before, during and after your surgery.

### **Anesthesiologist or Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA)**

who will keep you safe and comfortable during and immediately after your surgery.

### **Pre-Op Assessment Nurse at Rutland Regional**

who will get you prepared for anesthesia.

### **Nurse Case Manager**

who will coordinate your care before surgery, during your hospital stay and after discharge from the hospital.

### **Pharmacy Technician**

who will review medications you take and ensure they are in the hospital medication list.

### **Physical Therapist**

who will design a rehabilitation program to build strength and aid recovery.

### **Occupational Therapist**

who will teach you how to make daily activities safer and easier after Joint Replacement Surgery.

### **Nurses**

who are specially trained for the care of joint replacement patients before, during and after your surgery.

### **RN Surgical Scheduler at VOC**

who will get you scheduled for your surgery and assist you with appointments as needed.

## Get in Shape for Surgery

### Nutrition

Good nutrition is important, especially for patients planning surgery. Be sure to eat a balanced diet to help you to recover well and heal properly from your surgery.

Just prior to surgery is **not** the best time to start a diet for the purpose of weight loss.

To optimize your body's ability to heal, be sure to eat food from all food groups.

If you suffer from obesity, pre-operative weight loss will decrease your risk of complications. If you would like information to help you with weight loss, discuss this with your surgeon and/or primary care provider.

### Alcohol & Drugs

If you drink alcohol, try your best to not have any for at least 48 hours prior to surgery. If you have an alcohol dependency problem, please inform your primary care provider and/or surgeon prior to your surgery.

If you use drugs or any other types of controlled substances, tell your primary care provider and/or surgeon. These substances can have an impact on your surgery and recovery.

### Smoking

Smoking decreases blood flow patterns, delays healing and slows your recovery. For ongoing support and help to quit tobacco use, the following programs are suggested:

- Rutland Regional Medical Center's Tobacco Treatment Program 802.747.3768
- Vermont Quit Line 877.937.7848
- New York State Quit Line 888.609.6292
- Anywhere in the USA 800.784.8669

**IF YOU SMOKE,  
STOP!**

For more info, or to share stories, tips and advice, please check the following websites:

- [www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco)
- [www.802quits.org](http://www.802quits.org)





# Medical Preparation

## History and Physical Exam

You must have an appointment to see your primary care provider before this surgery. He/she must conduct a general medical evaluation within 30 days of your surgery. This examination will assess your health and your risk for anesthesia. Inform your provider of any medical conditions you have, all the medications you are taking and any surgical implants you have.

## Testing

You may have a blood test, urine sample, EKG and Chest x-ray, depending on your medical problems. Your primary care provider or specialist will determine if any other testing should be done. If you are sent to a specialist, please keep us informed so that we have all information available to us prior to your day of surgery.

## X-Rays

You should have x-rays done of your affected area within 6 months of surgery and these should be done at the orthopaedic surgeon's office to ensure appropriate sizing for pre-operative planning.

## Dental Care

It is important that your teeth be in good condition. An infected tooth or gum is a possible source of infection at the surgical site. If you are planning any dental work such as extractions, cleaning or periodontal treatments, you should schedule them well in advance of your surgery.

No planned dental work should be performed for three months after surgery unless urgent.

## Medications

A preadmission nurse and a pharmacy technician will be reviewing your medications with you prior to surgery. It is important to update your medication list to include the medication name, dose, and time of day you take each medication.

Specific recommendations for prescribed medications and supplements/herbals/ vitamins that you need to take or hold as you get closer to surgery will be provided by a preadmission nurse prior to surgery; it is important to follow these recommendations to prevent delay of surgery and possible rescheduling.

The following medications and supplements may interfere with your surgery and should ALWAYS be stopped as directed.

### Please ...

- review the list of medications on the following pages  
**and**
- the timeframe that they should be stopped before surgery  
**and**
- ensure you follow the recommendations.

**Taking these medications or supplements close to your surgery date could require rescheduling surgery.**

# Important Information Regarding Your Medications

**Herbal Medications** – For your safety, please note that a large percentage of people taking herbal medications/supplements may be at risk for potential interactions between prescription medicines, over-the-counter medicines, or with anesthesia medications.

- Give a detailed and accurate list of all medications you are taking to your surgeon/primary care physician and pre-op nurse.
- Some of the more common herbal medicines used that cause potential interactions are listed below under Dietary Supplements. This is just a small list of herbs available.
- If you have any questions regarding any medicines/supplements you are taking, please call the pre-op nurse at 802.747.1741, if possible, two weeks prior to your surgery to prevent postponement.

## Two (2) Weeks Before Surgery – Stop Taking:

- Herbal products
- Vitamins
- Dietary supplements

This includes but is not limited to:

- CBD
- CoQ10
- Diet pills
- Dong Quai
- Echinacea
- Ephedra
- Fish Oils (*Omega-3 Fatty Acids*)
- Garlic pills
- Ginger
- Gingko Biloba
- Ginseng
- Kava
- Licorice
- Melatonin
- St John's Wort
- Valerian
- Vitamin E (*also found in multivitamins*)
- Vitamin K

Additionally, please discuss with your prescribing provider before stopping monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOI), a specific type of antidepressant:

- Azilect®
- Nardil®
- Parnate®
- Selegiline

## 13 Days Before Surgery – Stop Taking:

- Mounjaro (*tirzepatide*)
- Ozempic (*semaglutide*)
- Wegovy (*semaglutide*)
- Bydureon (*exenatide extended-release*)
- Trulicity (*dulaglutide*)

## One (1) Week Before Surgery – Stop Taking:

- Celebrex®
- Diclofenac
- Doan's Pills
- Dristan products
- Effervescent tablets
- Fiorinal
- Ibuprofen (*Advil®, Motrin®*)
- Meloxicam
- Naproxen (*Aleve®*)
- NSAIDs including but not limited to Aspirin (*if used for pain*)
- Pepto Bismol®
- Percodan
- Please note: Acetaminophen (*Tylenol®*) is safe to take.

## 72 Hours Before Surgery – Stop Taking:

- Jardiance (*empagliflozin*)
- Farxiga (*dapagliflozin*)
- Invokana (*canagliflozin*)

### 48 Hours Before Surgery – Stop Taking:

- Metformin (*Glucophage*®)
- Sildenafil (*Viagra*®)
- Tadalafil (*Cialis*®)
- Trimix injection
- Vardenafil (*Staxyn*®, *Levitra*®)
- Varenicline (*Chantix*®)
- Byetta (*exenatide*)
- Adlyxin (*lixisenatide*)
- Soliqua (*lixisenatide/insulin glargine*)
- Saxenda (*liraglutide*)
- Victoza (*liraglutide*)
- Xultophy (*liraglutide/insulin degludec*)
- Rybelsus (*semaglutide*)

### You Must Check with Your Medical Provider or Specialty Provider if You Take:

- Adalimumab (*Humira*®)
- Allopurinol
- Anagrelide (*Agrylin*®)
- Aspirin (*for heart disease/stroke*)
- Azathioprine
- Cyclosporine
- Colchicine
- Etanercept (*Enbrel*®)
- Hydroxychloroquine (*Plaquenil*®)
- Infliximab (*Remicade*®)
- Mesalamine (*Apriso*®, *Asacol*®, *Canasa*®, *Delzicol*®, *Lialda*®, *Pentasa*®)
- Methotrexate
- Naltrexone (*ReVia*, *Vivitrol*®)
- Pentosan (*Elmiron*®)
- Pentoxifylline (*Trental*®)
- Sirolimus (*Rapamune*®)
- Sulfasalazine
- Tacrolimus (*Prograf*®)

### Blood Thinners:

Specific recommendations for when to stop and restart blood thinners will be provided by the Anticoagulation Clinic and/or your primary care provider/specialty provider, examples of these medications are:

- Apixaban (*Eliquis*®)
- Cilostazol (*Pletal*)
- Clopidogrel (*Plavix*)
- Dabigatran Etxilate (*Pradaxa*®)
- Dipyridamole (*Persantine*, *Aggrenox*)
- Edoxaban (*Savaysa*®)
- Prasugrel (*Effient*)
- Rivaroxaban (*Xarelto*®)
- Ticagrelor (*Brilinta*®)
- Ticlopidine (*Ticlid*)
- Vorapaxar (*Zontivity*)
- Warfarin (*Coumadin*®, *Jantoven*)

### Medications to Take on the Morning of Surgery:

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# Minimizing Infections When Having Joint Replacement Surgery

## Pre-Admission Nasal Screening

In preparation for your surgery, we will be collecting a swab from your nose. This will be collected at the time of your education class. The sample will check for Staph bacteria. Staph bacteria can be present in many healthy individuals without causing them to be sick; this is known as “colonization.”

There are two types of Staph Bacteria:

- MRSA – Methacillin Resistant Staph Aureus (*Methacillin is a type of antibiotic*)
- MSSA – Methacillin Sensitive Staph Aureus

During your class you will be given a prescription for a nasal ointment.

- If your test is **positive**, you will receive a call within one week to inform you which type of bacteria is present. You will need to get the prescription filled and will be told which instructions to follow.
- If your test is **negative**, you will NOT receive a phone call and you can destroy the prescription.

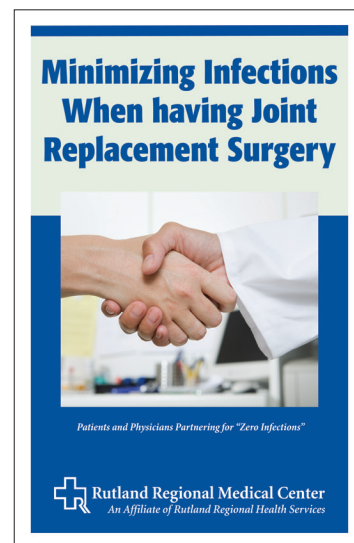
It is important that you read the **Minimizing Infections When Having Joint Replacement Surgery** booklet, which you will receive in your pre-op education class.

## To Decrease the Risk of Infection

- **Dental Work:**  
Do Not schedule any elective dental work – including cleanings – within the 2 weeks before surgery or for 3 months after your surgery, unless the need is urgent.
- **Stay healthy before surgery.** Notify your doctor if you come down with a fever, cold or any other illness in the week prior to surgery. In addition, any blisters, cuts or boils should be reported. If infection is found, surgery is generally delayed until the infection is cleared.

## Skin Prep

It is very important to make every effort to prevent infections at the time of your surgery. Washing your skin prior to arrival at the hospital is the first step you can take to decrease this risk.



## Four Days Before Your Surgery

For specific dates, please reference your individual calendar provided to you.

### Help reduce your risk for infection by following these directions:

- ▶ You will be given 5 medicated sponges for skin preparation before your surgery.
- ▶ You will take four night time showers and a fifth shower the morning of surgery.
- ▶ **DO NOT** shave legs, submerge your body in water, use hot tub, swim, or do barn chores once you have started your skin preparation showers.

### Bed linens:

- ▶ Change the linens on your bed the same evening of your first shower only
- ▶ Do not let pets sleep next to you under the cover.

### Shower instructions:

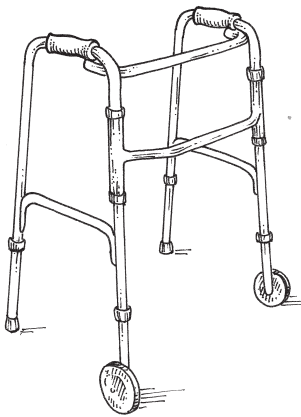
If you want to wash your face or hair, do this first with **usual** soap/shampoo and rinse well. **DO NOT** use medicated sponges on face, ears, hair or genitals.

To Shower Body:

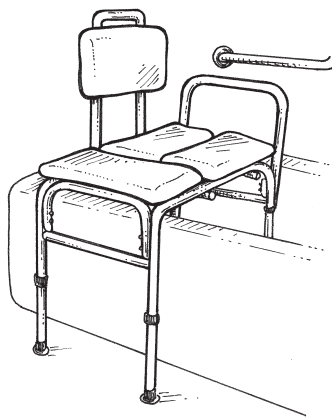
1. Open one medicated sponge package, remove fingernail stick and throw it away
2. Wet your body in the shower
3. Step away from water or turn water off – suds need to stay on your skin to kill bacteria
4. Using the SPONGE SIDE only
  - Wash from the chin down creating suds. This should take 2-3 minutes. Be sure to **wash well** your armpits, front of groin, and any skin folds you may have because bacteria live in warm, moist places.
  - Lather should REMAIN on your skin for 2-3 minutes for a total of 5 minutes to reduce skin bacteria.
5. Rinse well
6. Dry with a clean, fresh towel after each shower
7. Repeat for a total of 5 showers

## Equipment to Look for Before Surgery

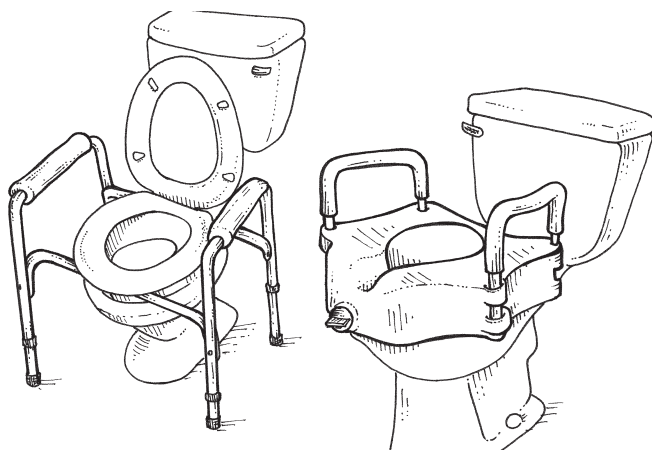
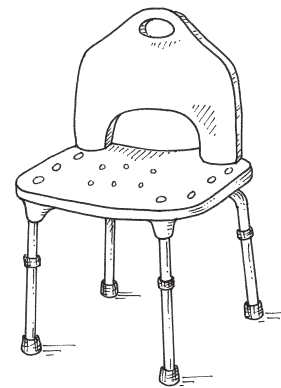
- Your insurance will not pay for this equipment before surgery but may after.
- Start asking now to see if you can borrow some of the equipment shown below from a friend, relative, club, etc.
- If you are not able to find the needed equipment, the Case Manager will visit you in the hospital and assist you in obtaining the additional items you may require.



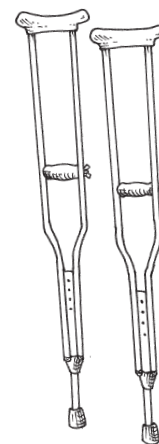
Walker with wheels on the front



Tub Transfer Bench for over tub shower or Shower Chair for walk in shower



Commode for over the toilet or Elevated Toilet Seat with arms



The hospital can provide crutches if needed

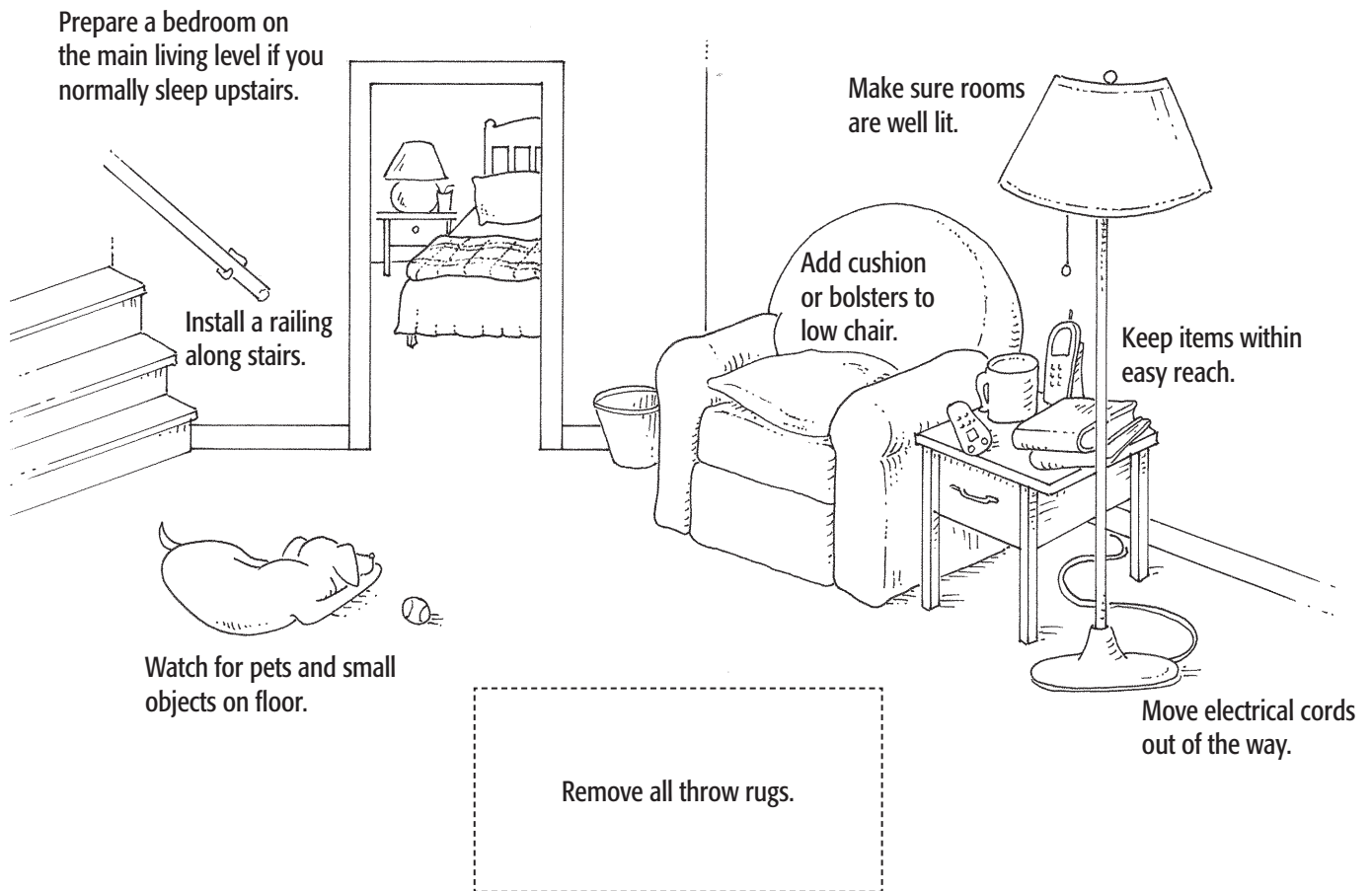
## Home Preparation Before Surgery

Discharge from the hospital averages 24-48 hours after the procedure.

**You are encouraged to arrange for someone to assist you in the first two weeks after discharge from the hospital as you will be recovering from the surgery.**

- Scatter rugs should be removed or taped down to prevent you from tripping.
- You should have enough room to walk with a walker or crutches. No Clutter!

- You should place frequently used items at waist level, for example, hair products, extra roll of toilet paper, refrigerator items, etc.
- Arrange for pets to be cared for during your recovery period as they may get underfoot. It will be difficult for you to feed and water them after your surgery.



## Planning for Your Hospital Stay

Personal items and clothing should be limited to those which fit into a single, small piece of luggage. There is very little storage space in your hospital room.

Regarding your hospital stay, please note the following:

- We prefer that you use a hospital gown the first day after surgery. It is less restricting and easier to get on and off. Clean hospital gowns are available at all times.
- You will be walking shortly after surgery. Shoes with non-skid soles are preferred. Bring orthotics if you use them. You will want to wear loose fitting clothes after surgery. Physical Therapy will be walking with you in the hallway while you are in the hospital.
- The hospital provides basic toiletry articles. If you prefer a special type of soap or hair product, please bring them with you along with any of your basic cosmetics.
- Electric razors, CPAP machines and battery-operated appliances are the only appliances you may bring to the hospital. This is for the safety of you and other patients.
- You may bring a computer, cell phone or tablet. The hospital does have wifi.
- If you have a cane, walker or crutches, make arrangements for them to be brought to the hospital the day of discharge.

### Additional Items to Bring to the Hospital

- **Health Care Proxy**, if you have one.
- **Short, Lightweight Bathrobe**, if you have one. Short clothing helps to prevent tripping while you walk.
- **Loose Fitting Clothes**, to walk in halls.
- **Eyeglasses instead of Contact Lenses**. They are easier to take care of and less likely to be lost in the hospital.
- **Dentures**. We will provide a container for storing these. Bring your own denture adhesive. When you remove them, be sure to keep the container on your bedside table or in a drawer, and not on the bed or a food tray. As with glasses, we cannot be responsible for loss.
- **This book**.
- **Written List of Medications** you are taking or were instructed to bring to the hospital with you. Include any you may have stopped in anticipation of surgery.
- **Telephone Numbers** of people you may want to call.
- **Book, Magazine or Hobby Item** to assist with relaxation.



## What Not to Bring to the Hospital

- Valuables or Money**  
Cash in excess of \$20.00 should be deposited in the hospital safe when you arrive or sent home with your family.
- Jewelry**
- Credit Cards**
- Your Own Medications Unless Instructed to Do So by Your Primary Care Provider, Surgeon or Pre-op Nurse**
- Pillow and/or Blanket**  
The hospital will provide those for you.
- Tobacco or Tobacco Products**  
Smoking of any kind is prohibited on the hospital campus.
- Do Not Wear Nail Polish on Your Hands or Feet**  
Please remove prior to your stay at the hospital.
- Do Not Wear Any Makeup**  
You may bring it with you to use after your surgery.
- We respect your property rights but cannot guarantee security for your personal property.**

## Health Education at Rutland Regional

At Rutland Regional we understand that having surgery is never easy. That's why our surgeons and staff work hard to make your surgical experience as comfortable and convenient as possible. To help prepare you for your surgery, please visit our website for information and videos pertaining to your surgery:

Scan the QR code or follow this link  
[www.RRMC.org/education](http://www.RRMC.org/education)



Click the links for:  
[Pre-Surgical Videos](#) & [Joint Replacement Surgical Videos](#)

Please watch these videos:

- Preparing for Your Surgery
- Pre-surgery, Joint Replacement

## The Day of Your Surgery

You must call the Ambulatory Care Unit at 802.747.1741 between the hours of 2pm and 4pm the day before your surgery or on the Friday before if your surgery is on a Monday. At your education class, you will be given instructions on when to call for your arrival time.

### On The Day Of Your Surgery

No food 8 hours before arrival for surgery. This includes candy or chewing gum. If directed, take medications with a sip of water on the morning of your surgery. You may have clear liquids only up to 2 hours before arrival time. Clear liquids are water, apple juice, cranberry juice, or ginger ale.

If you get thirsty, you may rinse your mouth with water and spit it out. Do not swallow. If you forget and eat or drink something, please tell the nurse or doctor. The time of your surgery may need to be changed or postponed as this will be safer for you.

### Arriving for Your Surgery

On the day of your surgery, please report directly to the Ambulatory Care Unit. Take the lobby elevator to the second floor. Turn right off the elevator and go to the window to let the secretary know that you have arrived.

### Ambulatory Care Unit (ACU)

Plan to arrive at the hospital at the time you were instructed. Arrival time is approximately two hours before your surgery to assure there is enough time to prepare you and answer any questions you may have.

You will be shown where and how to change into a hospital gown. Your clothing and personal items will be labeled and sent to your room after surgery. Final details will be completed and paperwork will be double-checked.

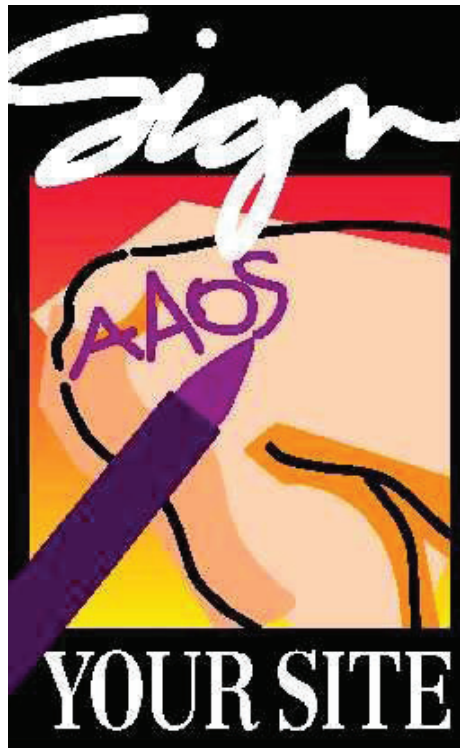
The nurse will prepare you for surgery by:

- Checking your blood pressure and heart rate
- Asking you about your medications and what you may have eaten that day
- Preparing your surgical site
- Starting an Intravenous (IV) line
- Applying elastic stockings as ordered by your surgeon
- Giving you some medications that the doctor has ordered for you including an antibiotic



Your orthopaedic surgeon will visit with you before surgery. He/she will answer any last minute questions you may have. At this point, he/she will verify with you the surgical site and will place his/her

initials at that site. This is to assure that the correct location will be operated on. This mark will be used for verification throughout the surgical procedure.



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**Please do not mark your body in any way.  
This is a very specific guideline!**

# Anesthesia

Once the nurse has finished preparations, the anesthesiologist will meet with you. He/she will discuss your health history, the kind of procedure you are having and the type of anesthesia you will be receiving. You will have time to discuss any anxiety, fears or to ask questions you may have. The anesthesia team may include a nurse anesthetist who assists the anesthesiologist with your monitoring and care during surgery. When you have surgery, you must have anesthesia. Types of anesthesia that may be offered include:

## General Anesthesia

You are unconscious and have no sense of awareness or sensation of pain. This can be accomplished using a variety of medications either given intravenously or via inhaled vapors through a mask or breathing tube.

## Regional Anesthesia

The anesthesiologist will make an injection of local anesthetic near a cluster of nerves to completely numb the area of the body that requires surgery. You may then remain awake, or may be given sedation. Either way you will not see or feel the actual surgery taking place. There are many types of regional anesthesia; the two most commonly used are spinals and epidurals.

## **Nerve Block** *(still will require anesthesia, general or spinal)*

A type of regional block to help with pain management for certain procedures. It is intended to lessen pain by numbing the area. This will **not** take pain away, but will decrease pain.

## What to Expect:

Before surgery you will be evaluated by an anesthesiologist. An anesthetic plan will be formulated which is best for you.

While in the operating room, you will be constantly monitored by your anesthesiologist. The monitoring includes EKG (*electrocardiogram*), blood pressure, oxygen level and temperature.

After surgery the effects of the anesthetic medications will be reversed and you will be closely monitored in the post anesthesia care room (*recovery room*) by specially trained nurses.

If you have specific questions or concerns about anesthesia before the day of your surgery, please speak with any of the following people:

- Your primary care provider
- Your surgeon
- The Preoperative Assessment Nurse in Ambulatory Care

You may also arrange an appointment to see the anesthesiologist before the day of your surgery by speaking with the preoperative assessment nurse.

## The Holding Area

The Holding Area is a small area just outside the Operating Room. Here you will meet with a second anesthesia provider and the nurse that will be with you in the Operating Room.

In the Holding Area you may be given sedation to help you relax before entering the Operating Room.



## The Operating Room

A special operating room is used to protect you against infection. Your doctor and nurses will be dressed in sterile gowns, masks and gloves.



## The Post Anesthesia Care Unit (*Recovery Room*)

Once your surgery has been completed, you will require close monitoring. You will be taken to the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) where a specially trained nurse will help you in the recovery process. You may spend one to three hours in the PACU. In PACU, you will be provided with oxygen, intravenous lines, and continuous cardiac and respiratory monitoring while your anesthesia wears off.

As you wake up, you may experience blurry vision, a dry mouth and feel cold. These effects are common and will wear off in short order. A nurse will stay with you while you wake up to encourage, assist and monitor your progress.

An oxygen mask may be placed over your nose and mouth. Taking deep breaths will help to clear your lungs and help get some of the anesthesia medicine out of your system.

You may have some pain. The nurses will frequently ask you about your pain level. If you feel any pain or discomfort, let them know and you will be given medication to help control the pain. You will remain in PACU until you are stabilized. The anesthesiologist will determine your readiness to be transferred to your in-patient hospital room.

While you are in PACU, visitation by friends or family is not allowed. Your family will be kept well informed and will be notified when you leave the PACU for your room.



## Surgical Care Unit

After surgery you will be wheeled in your bed to The Surgical Care Unit (SCU). You may be in a private room or a room with another patient, depending on bed availability on the day of your surgery. The room features:

- Controls on bed rail for you to put your head up or down.
  - Trapeze to help you pull up in bed
  - Side rails to help you roll
  - Nurse call bell for assistance
  - Nurses specially trained to care for patients having joint replacement will care for you
  - Your Case Manager will visit to assist you with planning for your discharge
  - Television (*no extra charge*)
  - Phone for local calls only (*no extra charge*)
  - You may bring a cell phone to use at your bedside
  - White Board to keep you informed of your plan of care and the name of the staff members that will be caring for you
  - A bed alarm will be placed on you to prevent injury until you are fully awake and able to get out of bed
  - Your length of stay in the hospital will be one day on average
- \* To prevent you from falling, please never attempt to get out of bed without help.**





## Other Treatments You May Experience After Surgery

### Oxygen

When you wake up from surgery, you will be given extra oxygen. Often, you will have oxygen tubing in your nostrils the first night after surgery to keep the oxygen level in your blood high. This is typically removed the day after your surgery.

### Intravenous Fluids

Intravenous fluids that were started before surgery will be continued until you are able to take adequate amounts of fluid by mouth. When you are able to take fluids by mouth, the nurse will place a cap on the IV to keep the vein open in the event it is needed at a later time during your stay.

### Foley Catheter

Depending on your surgery, a Foley Catheter may be inserted. This catheter is a sterile tube that is inserted into your bladder to ensure an open passageway for urine. It may be in place when you wake up from surgery.

If you have a catheter, it will be removed within 24 hours after surgery. The goal is to discontinue this as soon as possible to lessen the chance of getting an infection.

### Vital Signs

You will be receiving frequent blood pressure and temperature checks. The nurse will be checking your vital signs throughout the night time hours while you are in the hospital.

### Ice Packs

Ice packs will be used during your hospital stay and at home to reduce pain and swelling at the surgical site. Pain and swelling will slow your progress with your exercises. The ice pack is used continuously and you will be sent home with extra inserts to keep in your freezer.

### Daily Blood Draws

Your orthopaedic surgeon may order additional bloodwork after your surgery.

## Help Prevent Lung Problems

After surgery it is important to exercise your lungs by taking deep breaths. Normally, you may take deep breaths each hour, usually without being aware of it. They are spontaneous, automatic and occur in the form of sighs and yawns.

However, when you are experiencing pain or drowsiness from the anesthesia or your pain medication, your normal breathing pattern can change. To help with your return to normal breathing patterns, you may be provided with an incentive spirometer by the nursing staff. He/she will show you how to use your incentive spirometer.

Using the incentive spirometer will measure the deep breaths that are necessary to expand the small air sacs of your lungs to help clear your air passages of mucous.

For the first several days following your surgery, we recommend that you use your incentive spirometer 10 times every hour while awake. After discharge, we recommend using it every two hours (*while awake*) for two weeks.

Also, coughing is another method for helping to clear your lungs. To cough effectively, we suggest you follow these steps:

1. Breathe in deeply through your nose
2. Hold your breath to a count of 5
3. Breathe out slowly through your mouth
4. On your 5th deep breath, cough from your abdomen as you breathe out
5. Make a habit of doing this 2 to 3 times an hour, especially when it is inconvenient to use the incentive spirometer



# Pain Management

While in the operating room your surgeon and team is already taking steps to help decrease the pain you will feel after surgery. Medical studies show that using a variety of different ways to reduce pain is better than relying on one. We will be asking you your pain level on a zero to ten scale with ten being the worst pain.

Our goal is to keep the pain you feel after surgery at a manageable level. After surgery we will do this by:

1. Checking on your pain level regularly throughout your stay in the hospital. Your nurse will be asking you about your pain level on a scale of 0 (*no pain*) to 10 (*worst pain ever*).
2. Ordering a scheduled dose of a non-opiate pain reliever, such as acetaminophen (*Tylenol*®), that can be given in your IV or by mouth.
3. Utilizing ways other than medications to help reduce pain (*positioning, relaxation techniques, cold packs, physical therapy*).
4. Using an opiate pain medication when you absolutely need it for pain relief: morphine, oxycodone, hydromorphone (*Dilaudid*®), hydrocodone (*Vicodin*®).

Keeping opiate medication use to a minimum is important to us because of the short-term and long-term risks.

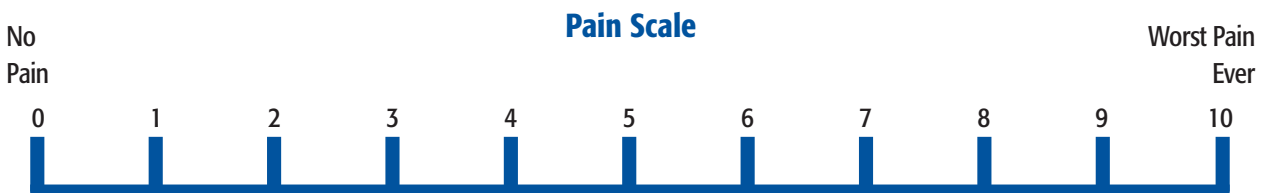
Potential risks:

- Accidental opiate overdose
- Increased sensitivity to pain
- Nausea, vomiting, constipation
- Physical dependence to opiates (*can occur following 2 to 10 days of continuous use*)
- Withdrawal after developing physical dependence (*symptoms are: pain, nausea, diarrhea, restlessness, craving*)
- Depression
- Opiate addiction

## Discharge Instructions

If you do receive a prescription for an opiate medication for short-term use post-operatively, remember:

- Never take more opiate pain medication than prescribed
- Never share your prescription for an opiate
- Store opiates in a safe, secure place
- Make sure you safely dispose of all unused prescription opiates. Rutland Regional's Pharmacy has a MedSafe disposal box that can help you do this.



## Minimize Your Risk for Blood Clots

**Blood clots in leg veins, also called DVT's** (*deep vein thrombosis*), can develop after surgery because you are moving less. When you walk, muscles in your legs help move the blood in your veins – without this added pump from your muscles, your blood is able to slow down and clot. Over time clots can grow and travel to places like your lungs; this is called a pulmonary embolism or PE.

Symptoms of a blood clot are swelling, redness, and tenderness in a specific area of your legs, chest pain and/or difficulty catching your breath. It is very important to report any of these symptoms to your provider or nurse. To decrease your chance of developing a blood clot:

- Your elastic stockings will be worn on both legs for one month after surgery to help improve bloodflow.
- When you are in the hospital in bed or sitting, leg pumps will be attached to your legs to help push blood through your veins.
- You will also be prescribed a medication to decrease the risk of developing a blood clot.
- Work with physical therapy as scheduled.

Your surgeon will decide the best medication to help prevent blood clots. Medication will be selected based on medical history and

other factors. A medication will be prescribed to decrease blood clotting ability such as:

- Aspirin
- Eliquis® (*apixaban*)
- Lovenox® (*enoxaparin*)
- Coumadin® (*warfarin*)

**If you were on a medication to thin your blood before surgery**, your surgeon will work with your prescribing provider to restart your medication post-op. It is important to take your medicine as directed.

The most common side effects of these medications are increased bruising and upset stomach. If you notice unusual bleeding or bruising, you should notify your provider or nurse. Unusual bleeding is red-tinged urine, stools or vomit, dark black tarry stools, any bleeding that takes more than 20 minutes to stop, or rapid worsening of knee/hip swelling and/or pain.

**A Pharmacy Technician** will contact you one to three days before your surgery to review your medication list. Please tell the Pharmacy Technician all prescribed medications and any over the counter medications or supplements that you take.

While in the hospital your nurse and case manager will review the medications that have been prescribed for you and will make any necessary appointments for bloodwork, if required, while taking the medication.

# Going Home from the Hospital

## Goals for Discharge

- Walk 150 feet with a walker or crutches
- Pain is managed with oral pain medication
- Ability to empty bladder without assistance
- Going up and down stairs safely
- Getting in and out of bed safely
- Medically stable

Most patients are ready for discharge from the hospital 24-48 hours after surgery. You will be able to return home in a regular sized car.

When having joint replacement surgery, you are considered a “well” patient who has had surgery. You will need assistance with meals, chores, laundry, etc., but not with movement. Most patients will do better in their own home environment during healing with the appropriate support available to help.

The Orthopaedic Clinical Liaison will be calling before you come to the hospital for surgery to assist in setting a safe discharge plan for you.



## Discharge Instructions

### Medication Prescription

Just before leaving, your surgeon will write prescriptions for you to get filled at the pharmacy of your choice. You will receive prescriptions for: pain medication, a blood thinning medication, and a stool softener.

Narcotic prescriptions cannot be called to a pharmacy. The hard copy must be handed to the pharmacy. Another person may pick this up for you but must show their photo ID and know your date of birth. Narcotic prescriptions must be filled in the state of Vermont.

## Discharge Instructions *(continued)*

### Surgical Site Care

Infections rarely happen after surgery, but you must remain alert to the possibility:

- Check the surgical site daily for signs of infection. Symptoms are:
  - Increased redness
  - Increase in swelling
  - Increase in pain
  - Any drainage
  - Oral temperature greater than 100.5°F

**NOTE: If any of the symptoms above occur, please notify your orthopaedic surgeon at 802.775.2937.**

- You may take a shower with the waterproof bandage in place. You will be given instructions in showering and when to remove this bandage.

### Pain Management

- Apply ice packs (*no heat*) to the surgical area a few times each day. Especially after activity, cold therapy will continue to reduce post-operative swelling and provide you with greater comfort.
- Take your pain medication as prescribed by your surgeon. Taking the medication before the pain becomes severe will help reduce the pain sooner.
- In the unlikely event that the pain medication does not work or you are experiencing unpleasant side effects, do not hesitate to contact your orthopaedic surgeon.

- If you are taking pain medication, please **avoid alcoholic beverages.**
- If you need a refill in pain medication, you must call the Orthopaedic office at 802.775.2937 and someone will be required to pick this up. Narcotics cannot be called in to a pharmacy. Note: 24 hour notice, Monday through Friday, is required.

### Long Range Protection Against Infection – Antibiotic Prophylaxis

Although it is very rare, an artificial joint can become infected by the bloodstream carrying bacteria from another part of the body. Therefore, it is important that every bacterial infection (*pneumonia, urinary tract infection, abscesses, etc.*) be treated promptly by your primary care provider. Routine colds and flu, as well as cuts and bruises, do not need to be treated with antibiotics. If you have any questions, you should not hesitate to contact your Orthopaedic Surgeon.

To prevent infection at any time in the future, you should take an antibiotic one hour before having any dental care (*especially cleanings*).

Antibiotics are NOT necessary for:

- Pedicures/manicures
- Gynecologic exams
- Colonoscopy
- Cataract surgery
- Injections or blood work

*It is important that you tell your primary care provider and dentist that you have an artificial joint. They may wish to prescribe the antibiotics for you or consult with your orthopaedic surgeon.*

### **Nutritional Program**

It is very important that you eat a well-balanced diet. Your body is in the process of healing and needs proper nutrition.

### **Managing Constipation**

Constipation may occur after surgery because of relatively little activity and the use of pain medication. To solve this problem:

- Increase your intake of water. Drink at least 8 glasses of water daily.
- Try adding fiber to your diet by eating fruits, vegetables and foods that are rich in grains.
- Take an over-the-counter stool softener or laxative.

### **Weight Loss**

It almost goes without saying – your body will feel better, work better if you are able to achieve a body weight appropriate to your age and size. While recovering from your surgery, now is an excellent time to build in new nutritional habits and goals.

### **Rehabilitation**

Your adherence to a rehabilitation program when you leave the hospital is an extremely important part of your recovery. If you have any questions regarding your rehabilitation program, ask your Physical Therapist for answers.

### **Driving**

Most patients are able to resume driving about four weeks after surgery. Your ability to drive depends on your leg positioning, strength and coordination. You must be off narcotic pain medication before driving.

### **Follow-up Appointments**

Regardless of how well you may feel after surgery, it is necessary for you to attend all follow-up appointments with your surgeon. These are typically at one month, 10 weeks, and one year after surgery, then every three years for the lifetime of your prosthesis.

### **Specific Discharge Instructions**

You will receive individualized instructions when discharged from the hospital. Your plan will be individualized and set up by the Case Manager.







# Language Assistance Services

Rutland Regional provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as: 1. Qualified sign language interpreters; 2. Written information in other formats (*large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats*); and 3. Free language services through qualified interpreters to people whose primary language is not English.

If you need these services, ask your nurse for assistance. Or you may contact the Social Work Department, 802.747.3713, or the Switchboard, 802.775.7111.

Attention: If you speak a language other than English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-866-237-0173. Identification number 05701.

French – ATTENTION: Si vous parlez français, des services d'aide linguistique vous sont proposés gratuitement. Appelez le 1-866-237-0173. Numéro d'identification 05701.

Spanish – ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-866-237-0173. Número de identificación 05701

Chinese – 注意:如果您使用繁體中文,您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-866-237-0173。ID号 05701

Vietnamese – CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số 1-866-237-0173. Số ID 05701

Nepali – ध्यान दिनुहोस्: तपाईंले नेपाली बोल्नुहुन्छ भने तपाईंको नम्रिभाषा सहायता सेवाहरू निःशुल्क रूपमा उपलब्ध छ । फोन गर्नुहोस् 1-866-237-0173. आईडी नम्बर 05701

Serbo-Croatian – OBAVJEŠTENJE: Ako govorite srpsko-hrvatski, usluge jezičke pomoći dostupne su vam besplatno. Nazovite 1-866-237-0173. ID broj: 05701

Cushite – XIYYEEFFANNA: Afaan dubbattu Oroomiffa, tajaajila gargaarsa afaanii, kanfaltiidhaan ala, ni argama. Bilbilaa 1-866-237-0173, 05701

Italian – ATTENZIONE: In caso la lingua parlata sia l'italiano, sono disponibili servizi di assistenza linguistica gratuiti. Chiamare il numero 1-866-237-0173. Numero ID 05701

Arabic – 1-866-237-0173 مقرب لصتا. ان اجمال لكل رفاوتت فيوغلا تدعاسملا تامدخ نإف، غللا ركذا شدحت تنك اذا: نظو حلم - 05701 ددع دي دحت.

Russian – ВНИМАНИЕ: Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Звоните 1-866-237-0173. Идентификационный номер 05701

Tagalog – PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad. Tumawag sa 1-866-237-0173. Numero ng ID 05701

Portuguese – ATENÇÃO: Se fala português, encontram-se disponíveis serviços linguísticos, grátis. Ligue para 1-866-237-0173. Número de Identificação 05701

Japanese – 注意事項:日本語を話される場合、無料の言語支援をご利用いただけます。1-866-237-0173。まで、お電話にてご連絡ください。ID番号05701

Polish – Uwaga: Jeśli mówić językiem innym niż angielski, usługi językowe, pomoc bezpłatnie, są dostępne dla Ciebie. Zadzwoń 1.866.237.0173. Numer identyfikacyjny 05701.

Armenian – Ուշադրութեամբ: Եթե խոսում եք հայերեն, սպա ձեզ անվճար կարող են տրամադրվել լեզվական աջակցության ծառայություններ: Ձանգահարեք 1.866.237.0173: Նույնականացման համարը 05701:

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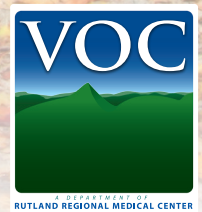




**Rutland Regional Medical Center**

[www.RRMC.org](http://www.RRMC.org) | 160 Allen Street, Rutland, VT | 802.775.7111

**Healthy You. Healthy Together.**



June 2023