

# Joint Replacement Recovery: Activity Guidelines

When you arrive home after joint replacement surgery, it's important to follow the activity guidelines detailed in your discharge plan. Follow this checklist to make sure your road to recovery is safe and healthy.

**DO:** Your post-surgical exercises as directed. Exercise twice a day for 20 minutes. **DO:** Walk around your house. Start slowly, maybe just one room at a time. Then try to increase the distance and amount of time you walk.

When climbing stairs: **DO:** Ask family or a friend to support you. If you need to rest, stop, and take some deep breaths before continuing up or down the stairs. **DO:** Balance your activities with rest. Your body is healing from surgery, and you will need to take breaks. If you do feel tired while being active, stop and rest.

**DO:** Go to all your physical therapy sessions. Depending on your recovery plan, a physical therapist may come to your home for your therapy session, or you may attend outpatient physical therapy at a rehabilitation center.

**DO:** Take your pain medication before any therapy or exercise session. Rehab and therapy are always harder to do if you are in pain. **DO:** Apply an ice pack to the area when you experience pain or swelling. This will reduce swelling and relieve some pain.

**Do Not:** Apply ice to your joint for more than 20 minutes at a time. **Do Not:** Sit for longer than 30-45 minutes at a time. Use chairs with arms for support. Recovery is hard work. But physical therapy and exercise will make you stronger so you can get back to doing the activities you love. Follow this checklist to make the transition home easier.