



# Getting ready for planned total knee replacement surgery

This leaflet gives advice on how to prepare yourself and your home for when you leave hospital after an elective (planned) total knee replacement operation. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Surgery and Orthopaedic Occupational Therapy Team on tel: 0118 322 8935 or write to us via Inpatient Therapies, Level 1 Battle Block, Royal Berkshire Hospital, London Road, Reading RG1 5AN.

## What is occupational therapy?

Occupations are any meaningful activities, including the ability to dress and wash yourself, make meals, go shopping, and all the functional movements required to do those tasks. After your operation and during recovery, these activities may be more difficult to do properly. Occupational therapists can provide advice and strategies to help you complete these activities with more independence.



## Mobility / transfers / stairs



The physiotherapy team will assess your transfers, mobility, and ability to complete the stairs, if appropriate. Mobility aids will be provided for you on loan to take home on leaving hospital. The therapy team will advise you if there are any concerns regarding your discharge.

## Equipment

As you are having elective (planned) surgery, the hospital does not provide equipment so you will need to buy or rent your own. You will also need to arrange necessary care or family support, and set it all up at home before your surgery. On the next few pages you will find lists of equipment that you may find helpful to regain your normal functions and activities.



## Toileting

<b>Raised toilet seat</b> This increases the height of your toilet, making getting on and off easier.	
<b>Free-standing toilet frame</b> A toilet frame can help you to get on and off the toilet safely and independently.	

<p><b>Free-standing toilet frame with a raised toilet seat</b></p> <p>A raised toilet seat and toilet frame in one. If your toilet is not a suitable height, it can be used to increase the height. The armrests can help you stand up from the toilet safely.</p>	
<p><b>Commode</b></p> <p>Recommended if you only have a toilet upstairs or downstairs and have concerns about making multiple trips up and down the stairs.</p>	




## Washing

After surgery, you should not submerge or soak your wound dressing until you have had your wound review at the GP (two weeks after surgery), so you will be unable to take baths initially.

<p><b>Perching stool (or other sturdy stool / chair)</b></p> <p>This can help you with washing and dressing, such as having a strip wash at the sink. The arms can help you to stand up more easily.</p>	
<p><b>Long-handled sponge</b></p> <p>Can be used when washing lower legs or your back.</p>	



## Dressing

You may find it beneficial to get dressed while sitting.

<p><b>Long-handled shoe horn</b></p> <p>Can assist you to put your shoes on.</p>	
<p><b>Long-handled grabber (helping hand)</b></p> <p>Can be used to pick things up from the floor, or to assist with dressing as it can be used as an aid to pull up lower garments.</p>	
<p><b>Sock aid</b></p> <p>Can be used to help you to put your socks on, as shown right.</p>	

## Meal preparation / shopping recommendations

- Buy supplies in bulk in advance to use during your recovery.
- If you have online access, consider registering for home delivery.
- Ask friends or family to shop on your behalf while you are still recovering.
- If you have a microwave, consider buying microwaveable meals in bulk to cut down on food preparation after your operation.
- Cook larger quantities of food in advance and freeze them in batches.
- Put essentials such as bread and milk in the fridge to keep you going for a few days or weeks.
- Think about re-arranging items in your kitchen, especially those you use most often so that they are within easy reach.

<b>Perching stool</b> This has can help you in the kitchen to sit on when doing food preparation, or household tasks. The back and arms can help you to stand up safely.	
<b>Kitchen trolley</b> Allows you to transport your meals / drinks during recovery while providing more stability when mobilising. Small tray (caddy) can also be sourced to add on if you have a Zimmer frame	

## Other furniture / environmental considerations

- Consider moving items to be at waist level to limit bending and reaching too low or too high.
- Put away non-fitted rugs or unnecessary items until you are fully recovered.
- Remove cords and any other tripping hazards.
- Ensure you have an armchair, recliner, or sofa that is at a safe sitting height.  
*Consider renting or buying a high-back armchair if your current seating is too low.*
- If you are concerned about your stairs, consider arranging downstairs living temporarily until you are fully recovered.
- If you are concerned about your bed, chair, or other furniture heights (e.g., shower chair, stair lift), then you can take measurements and bring it onto the ward. The therapy team will help you practice transferring from those heights to ensure you will be safe on discharge.



## Care / support

Care at home is not guaranteed upon discharge. If there are any concerns with how you may manage with the above occupations, then your occupational therapist (OT) will review and explore all possible options first, such as necessary equipment or family support. Care will only be put in place when it is essential for a safe discharge and is dependent on an OT assessment. If you would like to guarantee support at home, then it is advised to arrange care privately beforehand.

Hospital transport is also not available for elective surgeries, so please plan ahead and arrange a taxi, family, or friends to get you home from hospital.

## Where to get equipment

There are some online websites who offer equipment rentals, but the most cost-effective option is to purchase equipment from one of the vendors / stores listed below.

- **Red Cross Store:** <https://store.redcross.org.uk/collections/bath-aids-and-toileting-support>
- **Complete Care Shop:** <https://www.completecareshop.co.uk/> or Tel: 0300 1000 248
- **Amazon:** <https://www.amazon.co.uk/>
- **Boots:** <https://www.boots.com/homeware/livingaids>
- **Argos:** <https://www.argos.co.uk/browse/health-and-beauty/mobility-aids/>
- **Lloyds Pharmacy** <https://lloydspharmacy.com/pages/independent-living>
- **Local mobility stores**

Please see the Red Cross website or contact 0300 456 1914 to enquire about equipment donation once you no longer require the equipment.

To find out more about our Trust visit [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

<b>Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.</b>
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