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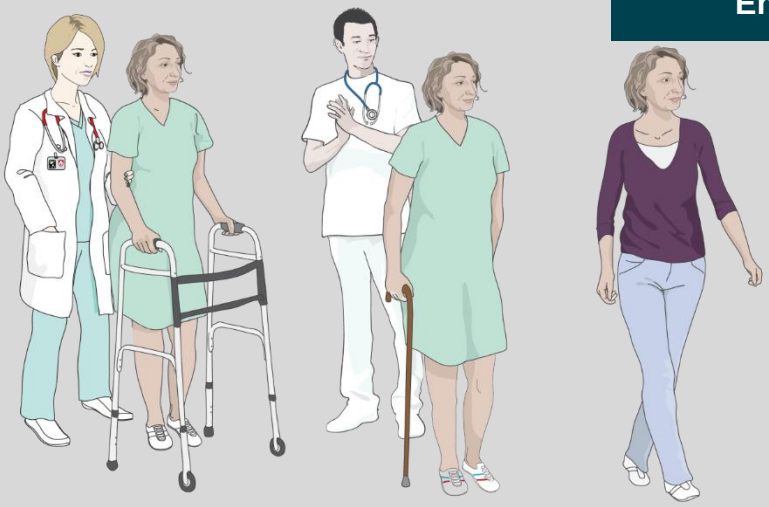
2026

Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux de Laval

ERAS Surgery Passport
Knee Replacement Surgery

Physiotherapy Guide

ERAS
Enhanced Recovery After Surgery



This guide will help you understand and get ready for your surgery.

Read it over with your family and bring it with you on the day of your operation.

Québec

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Note
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KNEE SURGERY PATHWAY

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Québec

Before your surgery

1 Prioritize a healthy lifestyle

- Meet with your orthopedic surgeon.
- Read your surgery guide.

- Stay hydrated.
- Stay active.
- Eat well.
- Stop smoking.
- Stop drinking.
- Stop using drugs.

2 Get an evaluation and information from the Preadmission Clinic

- Attend the group session.
- Meet with the nurse and other healthcare professionals.
- Have your pre-surgery tests and exams.

3 Prepare for your surgery

Get the necessary supplies.

- Read the documentation, watch the videos, and do the exercises.

Day before and day of your surgery

4 Day before your surgery

- Organize the spaces in your home.
- Get your surgery date.
- Ask a loved one to accompany you.

- Get your hospital arrival time.
- Pack a bag using the list of things to bring.
- Drink the clear fluid as recommended in the guide.
- Stop eating at midnight.

5 Day of your surgery

- Take a shower with the antibacterial soap.
- Drink the clear fluid as recommended in the guide.
- Arrive at the hospital at the indicated time.

6 Arrive at the hospital

Be accompanied to the operating room.

After your surgery

7 Recovery room

- Do your foot and breathing exercises as soon as possible.

8 Back in your room

- Start to eat again as soon as possible.
- Get up and start walking as soon as possible.
- Do the exercises on your own and with a staff member.

9 Back at home

(The day of your surgery or 1 to 2 days after)

- Continue your exercises.
- Get support from staff during your rehabilitation.
- See your orthopedic surgeon in 4 to 6 weeks.

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BEFORE YOUR SURGERY

Physical activity

Getting active before your surgery will prepare your body for the procedure. Do you already exercise? Keep up your good habits!

Otherwise, gradually add exercise to your daily routine at least 4 weeks before your surgery.

Find ways to be active every day:

- Walk to your mailbox every morning.
- Park at the back of parking lots.
- Get up frequently during your workday, etc.

A 10- to 15-minute walk every day is enough to get your body into better shape before your surgery. An exercise bike is another good option to increase your physical activity before surgery.

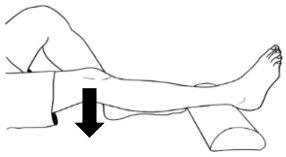
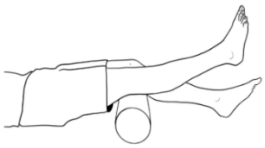
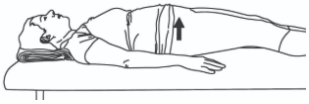
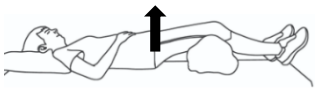
It is better to exercise more often for shorter periods than to only work out once a week.

Pre-surgery exercises

Exercise format:

- 10 repetitions
- 2 times a day
- Hold the contraction for 5 seconds

Spread the exercises over several sessions throughout the day. Start with Level 1 for all exercises. If an exercise becomes easy, move to Level 2. The difficulty level may vary for each exercise. If a more intense level increases your pain, go back to the previous intensity for a few sessions.

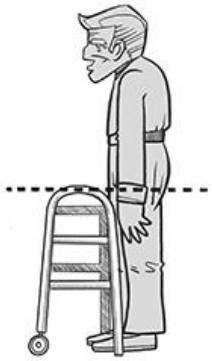
Preoperative exercises: KNEE			
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Thigh strengthening This exercise will help you: • Get up from a chair. • Go up and down the stairs.	 Place a rolled-up towel under your ankle and push your knee down toward the bed.	 With a rolled-up towel under your knee, lift your foot toward the ceiling.	 Stand facing a counter and bend your knees. Place a chair behind you for added safety.
Knee extension This exercise will help you: • Recover quickly. • Avoid limping when walking. • Avoid keeping your knee bent.	 Place your foot on a table or chair and rest your leg for 10 seconds.	 Lean against a chair or the bed and stretch the back of your leg. Don't bend your knees.	 Try to touch your toes while standing. Don't bend your knees.
Glute strengthening This exercise will help you: • Get up from a chair or the toilet. • Go up the stairs. • Avoid limping when walking.	 Lie down on a bed. Squeeze your glutes together.	 Place a pillow under your knees and lift your buttocks off the bed.	 With your knees bent, lift your buttocks off the bed.

Knee mobility This exercise will help you: • Go up the stairs. • Get in and out of a car. • Pick up an object from the floor.	 While sitting, slide your foot under the chair.	 While lying in bed, slide your heel toward your buttock.	 Apply extra pressure with a band.
Upper-body strengthening This exercise will help you: • Get up from a chair or the toilet. • Get out of bed. • Get in and out of a car.	 Use the armrests of the chair and lift your buttocks off the seat. Try not to use your legs.	 Use the armrests of the chair to fully extend your arms and stand up.	 Wall push-ups. Spread your feet if the exercise is too easy.

AFTER YOUR SURGERY

How to use a walker

After your surgery, make sure you have a walker with wheels at the front and skis at the back that is adjusted to your height. To adjust the height of the walker:



- Stand at an equal distance between the walker handles, with your back straight and your feet slightly apart.
- Let your arms hang down at your sides.
- Your wrist crease should be at the height of the walker handles.

After the walker is adjusted, walk normally with it. Stay near the rear legs of the walker.

Avoid carrying items in your hands when moving with your walker. Use an attached basket or bag.

Transfer techniques

Take time to practise these transfer techniques so that they will be easier after your surgery. Watch the videos in the orthopedics section of webwww.lavalensante.com.

Getting out of bed		
• Move to the edge of the bed.	• Put your healthy leg under your operated leg to help lift it.	• Push yourself up with your arms to get up.

Getting into bed		
• Sit on the edge of the bed.	• Lift your legs. • Put your healthy leg underneath to help lift your operated leg.	• Lie down slowly.

Sitting down

Sit in sturdy chairs with armrests. Avoid low chairs that are soft and deep.

- Move backward with the walker until the backs of your knees touch the seat.
- Place both hands on the armrests.
- Extend your operated leg out slightly in front of you (with your foot flat on the floor).

- Sit down slowly.
- Over time, you won't need to extend your leg as your knee will become more flexible.

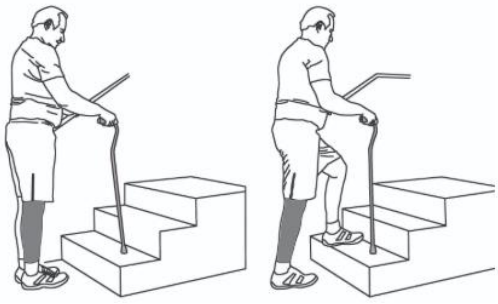
Getting up

- Move your buttocks to the edge of the chair.
- Make sure the walker is in front of you, and extend your operated leg.

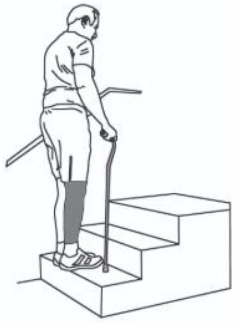
- Place your hands on the armrests.
- Stand up slowly.
- Once you are upright, use the walker for support.

Going up stairs

Use a cane and the handrail so that you always have two points of support.

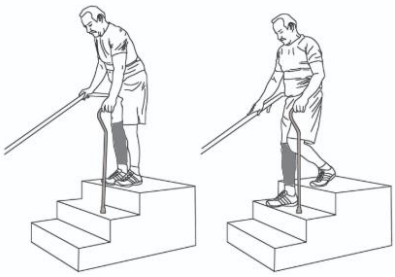


- Walk up to the first step.
- Place your healthy leg on the step.



- Using the handrail and cane for support, lift your operated leg and then your cane.
- Repeat for the other steps.

Going down stairs



- Walk toward the step.
- Lower your cane onto the first step.
- Lower your operated leg while leaning on the cane and the handrail.

- Next, lower your healthy leg.
- Repeat for the other steps.

Getting in and out of a car

Reminder: You will not be able to drive for about 2 to 6 weeks after your surgery. Refer to *Your ERAS Surgery Passport – Knee Replacement Surgery* given to you by the nurse.

- Put a garbage bag on the car seat to make it easier to slide onto the seat.
- Recline the seat and move it backward before getting in or out of the car.

- Move backward with your walker until the backs of your legs touch the seat.
- Place your left hand on the dashboard and your right hand on the back of the seat.

- Sit down slowly.
- Get in one leg at a time.
- Lift your thigh with your hands to guide the operated leg into position.
- Do the opposite to get out of the car.

Picking up objects from the floor

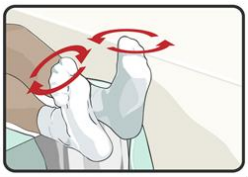
- Use a long-handled grabber.

- Extend your operated leg behind you.
- Lean against a chair or a sturdy surface and bend over your healthy leg.

Exercising after surgery

To prevent complications after your surgery, start exercising as soon as possible and continue to do so after you leave the hospital.

Take the initiative to do these exercises without waiting to be asked.

Incentive spirometer (breathing exerciser)	Ankle mobility	
		
Refer to *Your ERAS Surgery Passport – Knee Replacement Surgery*.	Point and flex your toes	Make circles with your feet/ankles

Getting up for the first time

Stay lying down until the freezing in your legs goes away and they can support your weight.

The nursing staff will supervise you the first time you get out of bed. It is allowed (and recommended) that you put your full weight on your operated leg, unless your orthopedic surgeon instructs otherwise. You will get up 2 to 4 hours after your surgery.

The nursing staff will supervise your exercises in a chair.

Walking

If your first time getting up goes well, you will walk with a walker and with assistance from the nursing staff.

Use your walker to get to the bathroom.

Avoid using a commode chair, bedpan, or urinal.

Exercises to do when you get home

Exercise is important for optimal recovery. Start exercising as soon as possible to keep your operated knee from getting stiff. The rehabilitation team will adapt and modify the exercises based on your progress.

Exercise format:

- 10 repetitions
- 2 times a day
- Hold the contraction for 5 seconds

Spread the exercises out over several sessions throughout the day.

Make these exercises part of your daily routine:

- Before getting out of bed, rotate your ankles a few times.
- Do weight transfers every time you stand up.
- While watching TV, practise contracting your thigh muscles.
- While sitting on a chair in the dining room or living room, lift your foot toward the ceiling.

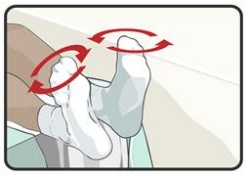
Ankle mobility

Point and flex your toes.

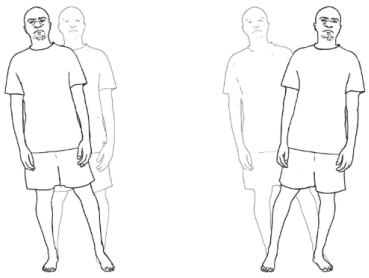
Repeat 20 times.

Make circles with your feet/ankles

Repeat 20 times.

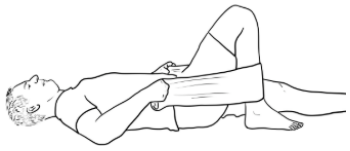


Weight transfer – standing



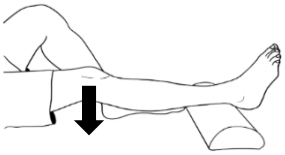
- Stand up and hold on to your walker or a counter.
- Slowly shift your weight onto your operated leg.

Knee bend – lying down



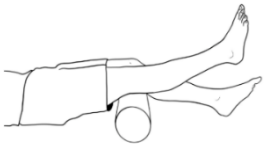
- Using a band for support, slide your heel toward your buttock.

Thigh contraction – lying down



- Place a towel under your ankle and press your knee toward the bed.

Heel lifts – lying down



- Place a towel under your knee and lift your foot toward the ceiling.

Resuming your normal activities

Stay active after your surgery. Alternate your exercise sessions with walking and rest. The rehabilitation team will help you progress through your exercise program and help you resume your sports activities.

Walking is an excellent exercise. An exercise or stationary bike is also good exercise for your knee mobility. In general, here is the recommended number of daily steps to do during the first weeks after your surgery:

- Week 1: <750 steps per day
- Week 2: <1200 steps per day
- Week 3: <2000 steps per day
- Week 4: <2750 steps per day
- Week 5: <3500 steps per day
- Week 6: <4500 steps per day
- After that: Increase by ±1000 per day per week, depending on your tolerance.

Ask your rehabilitation team about when you can go back to doing specific activities.

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NOTES AND QUESTIONS

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