



What is a Coach?

Just like an athlete, each patient needs a trainer/support person. A coach can be a family member or friend who can take on the responsibilities listed below.

Coach Responsibilities

- Make sure you are physically able to assist the patient if needed, especially with getting in and out of bed, going up and down steps, getting dressed and bathing.
- Bring in the walker the patient plans to use if you have one.
- Remind the patient to do ten deep breaths and thirty ankle pumps every hour after surgery if the patient is awake.
- Attend PT/OT (therapy) sessions after surgery. Therapy sessions for all patients will occur in the morning and afternoon. Knee patients will have specific therapy times starting the second day after surgery. It is preferred to have the coach available for all therapy sessions throughout the patient stay.
- Make sure you understand any precautions that need to be taken by the patient after surgery.
- Make sure you understand and can assist the patient daily with exercises if any are given to the patient by the therapists. **We welcome questions.**
- If the patient is to go home on Lovenox, make sure you learn the injection technique for this medication. The nurse will educate you and the patient.
- Make sure you understand how to use the Ice Machine if one is being sent home with the patient.
- Coaches of total knee replacement patients should make sure outpatient physical therapy has been scheduled. If you are not sure where to go, the therapist or Case Manager will give you a list of outpatient clinics in your area.
- Make sure you are available to take the patient home when the physician discharges him/her. Patients are typically discharged in the morning or early afternoon.
- Make sure you can stay with the patient at least for the first few days, preferably one week, following discharge from the hospital. You have been trained and educated on how to assist the patient and keep him/her safe.

Benefits of having a Coach

- Personal Support
- Improved Results
- Faster Recovery Time
- Increased Confidence
- Discharge Sooner

Patient: PLEASE BE AWARE, your coach may be exposed to medical information pertaining to your care. Thank you for your understanding.

Thank you for being a Coach!



1. After surgery how often do I need to be at the hospital?

The patient's physical and occupational therapies will be daily until goals for discharge are met. Goals will be set during the initial therapy sessions following the surgery. The therapist will provide you with an approximate time for the following day's therapy sessions, length of session times vary depending upon the needs of that individual. Please be aware that therapy includes some of the following:

- Practice of getting in and out of bed/car
- Use of stairs
- Walking the distance needed to get around the home
- Bathing
- Dressing with the use of aids or minimal help
- Getting in/out of chair and on/off a toilet

Additionally, the nurse will be working with you throughout the stay to understand topics such as caring for the incision, blood thinners, pain control, use of TED hose and ice therapy, recognizing/preventing potential complications. Before being discharged from the hospital the patient must be able to demonstrate some of the above therapy practices safely.

2. As Coach, how can I be of most assistance?

The patient will appreciate your support before and after surgery, and transitioning to home. Be open and honest. Assure the patient that you are there to support them and will help assist with the things they cannot do now. As the patient gets stronger, you will motivate them to resume their own care. This also often encourages emotional recovery from surgery. By being familiar with the exercise regimen and daily routine, you will be able to support and assist as needed.

3. Should I go to physician follow up visits and physical therapy appointments after surgery?

Discuss this with the patient. Too often, the patient will forget what the physician had said or neglected to ask questions because of all the information being given. Make a list of questions and concerns before the appointment and cross them off the list once they have been addressed. Being able to take note of recommendations by the physician, and having your questions answered, is all part of being the patient's advocate. The more you, the Coach, understands the more helpful you are to the patient.

If outpatient therapy is required, arrangements can be made prior to being discharged from the hospital. However, some patients prefer to set up their own therapy appointments based on days/times that are workable for both the patient and the Coach. The patient will be provided with a script for outpatient therapy. You will want to take this to the facility you have chosen and have them begin the insurance process. It is important to know what facilities are in your insurance network.

4. What should I do if my patient is not following physician or therapist orders after surgery?

Encourage the patient to follow the provided recommendations and instructions given to them. When not followed, there is a significant increased risk of complications not limited to, infection, slowed recovery time, increased and/or prolonged pain and range of motion issues.

5. What do I need to know and understand about pain control?

After surgery the patient will be given pain medication. Good pain control allows the patient to move and be more active. Pain medications work best when taken as the physician has prescribed. Encourage the patient to keep track of the medication effectiveness. If their level of comfort is not being met, be sure to contact the physician. It is important to be aware of additional comfort measures such as:

- Ice therapy
- Changes in positioning
- Diversional activities such as music, journaling or reading