

Patient Education

Bone and Joint Center



Pain Control After Your Knee Replacement

Helping your knee heal

The first six weeks after your surgery is critical for healing and exercising your knee (rehabilitation). How well your knee will work for you depends on your recovery in these first weeks, although it will continue to improve during the first year. Controlling pain is an important part of this recovery.

Reasons for Pain Control

Preventing pain from getting bad in your knee will:

- Make you more comfortable while your knee heals.
- Help your knee recover faster, because with less pain you can do your exercises.
- Help you increase your walking more quickly.
- Let you sleep better.

Scheduling for Pain Medicines

To keep pain under control:

- Take your pain medicine at set times during the day.
- Take it as often as your doctor has prescribed.
- Talk with your physical therapist about when you can decrease it. Ask any questions you have about pain control.
- Work on your range of motion (ROM) and strengthening exercises 30 to 45 minutes after taking your pain medicine.
- Take your pain medicine 30 to 45 minutes before each therapist visit.



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Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. The UWMC clinic staff are also available to help at any time—

**Bone and Joint Center
(206) 598-4288**

**Orthopaedic Resident
Doctor
(206) 598-6190**

If running low on pain medicine, page the orthopaedic resident

8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Ice on Your Knee

Ice on your knee helps with pain control and helps decrease swelling and stiffness. Ice your knee:

- Before doing ROM exercises
- Before each therapist visit
- Any time you feel you need an extra bit of pain control, such as *after* exercise or *after* walking.

How to Ice

When you ice your knee:

- Raise your leg on a foot rest or lay in bed or on a couch. Keep your knee straight.
- Wrap a gel pack or ice bag in a thin towel to protect your skin. Some gel packs have a cover.
- Ice both the top and underside of your knee.
- Leave the ice on your knee for about 20 minutes. Cover your whole knee along with the ice with a bath towel to keep it colder longer.
- Check how you ice your knee with your therapist.



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