

The Essential Role of the Hip and Knee Replacement Patient's *Buddy*



Buddy: _____

Patient: _____

Surgery Date: _____

Case Manager: _____

Hip replacement and knee replacement are major surgeries. Getting ready for a hip or knee replacement and recovering from it can be physically and emotionally challenging, especially for older patients.

Your decision to help by stepping into the role of patient 'buddy' is a very important one. As buddy, you will be an essential member of the patient's care team. You will also be the patient's biggest single support resource.

The level of support needed varies from patient to patient. **You and the patient should discuss what is expected of you well before the surgery takes place.** You should also learn about what will happen *before*, *during* and *after* surgery, and about what the patient must do to prepare for surgery and to have a safe and successful recovery at home.

No matter what you do, whether it is providing encouragement, doing errands or making things more accessible around the patient's home, your presence and support will be key to the patient having the best outcomes possible.



Here are some of the ways you can provide support as patient buddy:

- **Go with the patient to appointments and teaching sessions.** Attending these appointments is very important. There is a lot of information given and the patient may need help understanding it and taking notes.
- **Read both** the *teaching booklet* (“Your Guide to Knee Replacement” or “Your Guide to Hip Replacement”) and the *patient agreement* with the Hip and Knee Clinic.
- **Prepare the patient’s home.** Help to find and install the equipment the patient will need for a safe, successful recovery.
- **Translate information** if there is a language barrier, or find help if you cannot translate. (Some hospitals provide this service.)
- **Do the driving.** The patient will not be able to drive for *6 weeks or longer*. A ride will be needed:
 - ⇒ Home from the hospital.
 - ⇒ To 2-week and 6-week follow-up appointments at the Hip and Knee Clinic.
 - ⇒ To a diagnostic clinic if tests are needed.
 - ⇒ To out-patient rehabilitation if required.
 - ⇒ To do everyday activities, such as shopping, banking and picking up medications.

Some patients need personal assistance in special areas where they have limited ability or there is concern for their safety. Hospital staff will discuss with you any assistance the patient needs and show you how to provide it safely. This will occur on the day the patient is discharged from hospital. Here are some areas in which personal assistance **may** be needed:

Blood thinner injections. Blood thinners are taken to prevent clots, which can block the flow of blood. Some blood thinners must be taken by needle.

Going up and down stairs. Some patients need to be stabilized to prevent a fall when using the stairs.

Bathing. Some patients need help to safely get in and out of a tub or shower and to get on and off a bath or shower seat.



Changing bandages. The surgery incision must be kept clean to prevent infection. The bandage over the incision may need to be replaced at home. *(Note: Patients must provide bandages and other supplies.)*

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Prepared by the Edmonton Arthroplasty Education Working Group
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