

PHYSIOTHERAPY FOR JOINT SURGERY IN HAEMOPHILIA:

What to expect before and after your surgery



ACT

AGREE OPTIONS WITH YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM

CHECK YOUR READINESS FOR SURGERY

TAKE THE RECOMMENDED STEPS

PHYSIOTHERAPY BEFORE YOUR SURGERY

Physiotherapy is essential to help you to get the most out of your surgery, before your procedure as well as afterwards.^{1,2}

Physiotherapy exercises

Your physiotherapist will guide you through a series of exercises to prepare for surgery. This is sometimes called 'prehabilitation' and will help you to strengthen.²⁻⁵

- The muscles of the joint being operated on to improve mobility afterwards
- The muscles and joints near the affected joint
- Your upper body, to help you to walk with crutches or a walker after surgery, depending on the type of procedure that you are having

Exercise before surgery may not be suitable for everyone – for some people, it will be too painful. Your physiotherapist will advise you.⁴

Other considerations

Your physiotherapist will also help you to prepare for surgery by:^{2,4,5}



Guiding you on the **exercises** you will need to carry out after surgery, so that you have time to practice them



Giving you advice on carrying out **daily activities** after your surgery, including getting out of bed, using the bathroom, showering and dressing



Helping you to get familiar with using **mobility aids** or rehabilitative equipment, if needed



Assessing your **home environment** and needs after surgery (your occupational therapist will also be involved with this)

This material is for educational and informative purposes only. It should not replace any advice or information provided by your haemophilia specialist and/or other healthcare professionals.

Surgery in patients with haemophilia (with or without inhibitors) can carry specific risks that should be carefully assessed and discussed with your haemophilia specialist and multidisciplinary care team. Surgery in patients with haemophilia (with or without inhibitors) should always be done in consultation with a specialised haemophilia treatment centre.⁴

PHYSIOTHERAPY AFTER YOUR SURGERY

After your surgery, your physiotherapist and healthcare team will work with you to put together an exercise programme that works with your lifestyle and circumstances, the joint affected and procedure you have had.² The aim is to help you to **recover your mobility and range of motion** as much as possible, as well as **improving muscle strength and balance**.¹

Your physiotherapist will visit you daily while you are in hospital, to assess the joint and also begin your physiotherapy sessions.² These sessions will continue once you are discharged from hospital, either directly with your haemophilia treatment centre physiotherapist, or guided by them.⁴

Following your physiotherapy plan during the rehabilitation period is very important. Your healthcare team are here to support you along the way.⁴

Bleeding control and pain management

Careful attention will be given to bleeding control and pain management after your surgery, and especially before your physiotherapy sessions.²⁻⁵

- Factor replacement (or bypassing agent) cover will be given before each physiotherapy session, to reduce the risk of bleeding
 - It is very important to have a clear understanding of your dosing after surgery and before and after discharge, as this may change
- Pain relief will be given during your sessions
 - A cold compression or ice pack may help to reduce pain and swelling

It is important to be aware from the outset that an extended period of physiotherapy will be needed for you to get the most from your surgery.

A typical programme might involve sessions three times a week for the first 2-3 weeks after surgery, then twice weekly for a month, and may continue for 3 months or longer. Your programme will be tailored to your individual needs.^{2,4}

Recovery time varies from person to person and the type of procedure performed. It can take as long as 6 months or a year to achieve optimal strength and mobility.²



i Physical rehabilitation usually begins in the days after surgery but is delayed by a few days in patients with inhibitors to ensure control of bleeding.⁴

GOAL SETTING

It is important to set achievable goals to strive for in the weeks and months following your joint surgery. Your physiotherapist will help you with:

- Guidance on what you can expect in terms of pain reduction and improvement in function and mobility
- Tasks to be achieved in the months and weeks following your surgery. For example, weight bearing or walking a specified distance with or without mobility aids

Key considerations during rehabilitation²



Keep the incision clean and dry



Breathe deeply and cough frequently to avoid lung congestion



Keep moving, using assistive devices as needed



Eat a balanced diet and drink plenty of fluids



Ensure that you are taking your medication and doing your physiotherapy exercises as advised



Report any warning signs of infection immediately. Things to look out for include:

- Heat
- Redness or swelling of or around the wound
- Opening or drainage of the wound
- Pain not relieved by medication
- Fever
- Chest pains
- Breathing problems

References: 1. De Kleijn P et al. Haemophilia 2006;12(Suppl 3):108–112. 2. Canadian Hemophilia Society. A Guide on Orthopedic Surgery for People with Hemophilia. Available from: <https://www.hemophilia.ca/files/Challenges-Choices-Decisions%20Hemophilia.pdf> [Last accessed January 2020]. 3. Teitel JM et al. Haemophilia 2009;15:227–239. 4. Escobar MA et al. Haemophilia 2018;24:693–702. 5. Forsyth A and Zourikian N. Haemophilia 2012;18:550–553.

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