

Are there alternatives?

Yes, there are other treatments that do not require surgery. These include:

- Painkillers
- Weight loss
- Physiotherapy
- Steroid injections

Please ask your surgeon for more information.

Take home messages

1. TKR is a good operation to treat a painful, arthritic knee.
2. The average hospital stay is three days.
3. You must be motivated to do regular, self-directed exercises and walking to aid your recovery.
4. Most patients (80–85%) are satisfied with their surgery.
5. There are risks with surgery, which should be considered carefully.



Leaflet produced August 2015
Review date August 2017

Produced in conjunction with the
Enhanced Recovery After Surgery
(ERAS) committee

Total Knee Replacement Surgery (TKR)

Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

Patient Information Leaflet
August 2015

Introduction

Total Knee Replacement (TKR) surgery is a recommended treatment for the pain of degenerative knee disease. This is the same as 'wear and tear' of the knee.

At the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh (RIE) we perform 700-800 TKRs each year. Our waiting time is around 12 weeks.

About your surgery

You can expect to stay in hospital for three days following your surgery. Sometimes patients are ready to go home sooner than this, and sometimes later. You will be discharged when you are able to care for yourself independently.

We use cemented TKR implants, which have a proven, long track-record. They are safe to walk on immediately. You may even be up on your feet on the day of surgery.

Recovery after surgery

In the initial weeks after surgery your knee will be swollen and painful. You may require strong painkillers. Despite this it is essential that you perform daily exercises. This will help you get the bend back in your knee. Regular walks will also help your recovery.

You will start walking with two and then one stick for the first 5-6 weeks. During this time you cannot drive. If you are still working, you will require 8-12 weeks off work. This may depend on the type of job you do.

A TKR is good for treating knee pain. It does not always improve your knee range of motion. It can affect your ability to kneel or squat. TKR surgery is not a quick fix. It can take up to one year to feel the full benefits. Sometimes it can take even longer.

80-85% of patients are satisfied with their new knee at one year following surgery.

Are there risks involved?

There are risks associated with surgery, which must be considered carefully. The risks are divided into surgical (specific to the operation) and medical (related to your overall health).

Surgical

Infection:	1/200
Blood clots in leg (DVT) or lungs (PE):	1/70
Early revision operation within 3 years:	1/200
Amputation:	1/700

Medical

Kidney injury, stroke & heart attack:	1/100 to 1/1000
Death:	1/1000

These figures apply to the RIE and represent risks for all TKRs that we perform. Your personal risks may be different depending on your health. This should always be discussed with your surgical team.

(References: Scottish Arthroplasty Project Annual Report 2014, Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery)