

# Hip and knee replacement surgery

## Your medication after discharge

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We have very recently updated the medications that you go home with, so please use this information sheet rather than any other leaflet you may have been given.



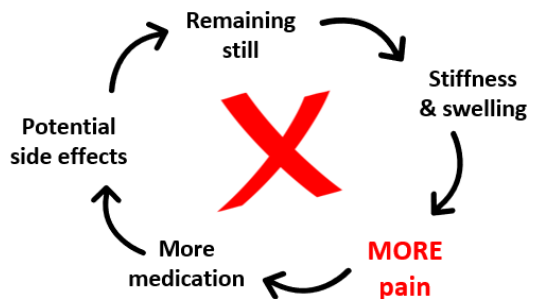
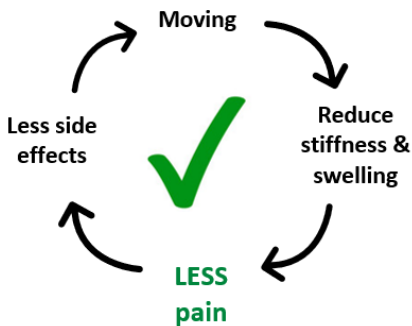
Most patients will go home with medication for:

1. Pain relief
2. Anti-sickness
3. Laxatives
4. Preventing clots
5. Stomach protection.

The exact combination of these medicines will vary person to person, but also changes the longer from your operation you are.

## Pain relief after the operation

Pain following an operation is normal and to be expected; it has a known cause and will improve as your body heals. You should expect mild to moderate pain on movement. Moving the joint may be uncomfortable, but movement reduces stiffness and swelling, and this helps with pain and healing.



Moving makes it better cycle images © Dr Claire Blandford, Consultant Anaesthetist, 2022

Following a hip replacement you will likely need strong pain relief on the day of your operation (“day 0”), the day after (“day 1”) and the day after that (“day 2”).

Following a knee replacement we would also expect you to also require strong pain relief on day 3 and 4. The strong painkiller we use is called oramorph, which is a form of morphine.

After day 2 following a hip replacement, and day 4 following a knee replacement, you should be able to stop this strong pain relief or at least reduce the dose.

We hope that 1-2 weeks after your operation, your pain will be much better and managed with simple pain relief like paracetamol.

## On the day of your surgery (day 0)

Date .....

If you stay in hospital, you will be given medication by the nurses.

If you go home, follow this guidance:

Time	6pm	10pm
<b>Pain relief</b>	Paracetamol Ibuprofen *	Paracetamol Ibuprofen*
<b>Preventing constipation</b>		Macrogol Senna

*\*Not all patients are prescribed this medication. Do not take if not prescribed*

You will need extra pain relief in addition to this– you can decide when you take this:

<b>When you need extra painkillers</b>	Take oramorph (also known as immediate release morphine) at the dose prescribed on your discharge letter You can take a dose every 4 hours You can take a maximum of 6 doses in 24hrs
	A hot water bottle or ice pack may also help
<b>If you feel sick</b>	Take ondansetron You can take a dose every 6 hours, up to 3 times per day

# One day after surgery (day 1)

Date .....

If you remain in hospital, you will be given medication by the nurses

If you are at home, follow this guidance:

Time	8am	12pm	6pm	10pm
<b>Pain relief</b>	Paracetamol	Paracetamol Ibuprofen*	Paracetamol Ibuprofen*	Paracetamol Ibuprofen*
<b>Preventing constipation</b>	Macrogol			Macrogol Senna
<b>Preventing clots</b>	Aspirin*		Dalteparin injection*	
<b>Stomach protection</b>	Lansoprazole *			

*\*Not all patients are prescribed this medication. Do not take if not prescribed*

You will need extra pain relief in addition to this– you can decide when you take this:

<b>When you need extra painkillers</b>	Take oramorph You can take a dose every 4 hours You can take a maximum of 6 doses in 24hrs
	A hot water bottle or ice pack may also help
<b>If you feel sick</b>	Take ondansetron You can take a dose every 6 hours, up to 3 times per day

## Two days after surgery (day 2)

Date .....

If you remain in hospital, you will be given medication by the nurses.

If you are at home, follow this guidance:

Time	8am	12pm	6pm	10pm
<b>Pain relief</b>	Paracetamol	Paracetamol Ibuprofen*	Paracetamol Ibuprofen*	Paracetamol Ibuprofen*
<b>Preventing constipation</b>	Macrogol			Macrogol Senna
<b>Preventing clots</b>	Aspirin*		Dalteparin injection*	
<b>Stomach protection</b>	Lansoprazole *			

*\*Not all patients are prescribed this medication. Do not take if not prescribed*

You will need extra pain relief in addition to this– you can decide when you take this:

<b>When you need extra painkillers</b>	Take oramorph You can take a dose every 4 hours You can take a maximum of 6 doses in 24hrs
	A hot water bottle or ice pack may also help
<b>If you feel sick</b>	Take ondansetron You can take a dose every 6 hours, up to 3 times per day

## Three days after surgery and beyond.....

If you remain in hospital, you will be given medication by the nurses.

If you are at home, follow this guidance:

Time	8am	12pm	6pm	10pm
<b>Pain relief</b>	Paracetamol	Paracetamol	Paracetamol	Paracetamol
<b>Preventing constipation</b>	Macrogol			Macrogol Senna
<b>Preventing clots</b>	Aspirin*		Dalteparin injection*	
<b>Stomach protection</b>	Lansoprazole *			

*\*Not all patients are prescribed this medication. Do not take if not prescribed*

You may need extra pain relief in addition to this– you can decide when you take this:

<b>When you need extra painkillers</b>	Take ibuprofen* (if you were prescribed it) You can take a dose every 4 hours, up to 3 times per day
	Take oramorph if you have some left You may wish to halve the dose that you were taking on day 0, day 1 and day 2
	A hot water bottle or ice pack may also help
<b>If you feel sick</b>	Take ondansetron You can take a dose every 6 hours, up to 3 times per day



## Important information about your medication

Detailed information about all these medications can also be found online at [www.nhs.uk/medicines](http://www.nhs.uk/medicines)



### Paracetamol

When taking paracetamol regularly you must not take other medicines containing paracetamol, e.g. co-codamol, co-dydramol and many cold and flu remedies.

If you weigh less than 50kg (approx 7 stone 12) you should reduce the dose to only 1 tablet (500mg) four times per day.

### Ibuprofen

If you are prescribed ibuprofen, it is important to take it with food. If taken on an empty stomach it can cause indigestion. If this happens to you, stop taking this medication.

### Preventing constipation

It is very important for all patients to regularly take medication to prevent constipation, before it occurs.

Constipation may occur after surgery because of changes in diet, immobility and strong painkillers. Constipation may cause abdominal pain, nausea and reduced appetite which may impact your recovery. The usual laxative medications prescribed are Senna and Macrogol. These are both very gentle and should be taken regularly whilst you are taking oramorph.

### Clot prevention

Your surgical team will decide on this – there are several different options. They will tell you how long to take them for. Some patients who are already on blood thinners for other reasons may be asked to just keep taking this.

## Stomach protection

Lansoprazole is prescribed with ibuprofen to minimise side effects such as indigestion and the risk of ulcers in your stomach or gut. Continue to take this for as long as you are taking ibuprofen.

## Opioid painkillers – keep them short, stay safe

Opioids such as dihydrocodeine, morphine (oramorph) and oxycodone can be really useful for a short time (up to 1 week) to help with your recovery after surgery. However, they can cause side effects and aren't very effective in the longer term. It's best that you don't take them for any longer than you need to.

The team looking after you on the ward will prescribe a safe dose of oramorph for you. If after a few days you find you are managing well with the pain, you can choose to reduce this dose. A rule of thumb would be to try halving the dose (e.g. if you are initially prescribed 10mg, which is 5mls, then after a couple of days you might wish to reduce this to 5mg, which is 2.5mls).

Opioids can cause side effects, such as:

- Nausea, vomiting and constipation
- Feeling drowsy, dizzy or confused
- Increased risk of having a fall
- Dry mouth
- Sweating.

If taken for a long time (weeks), additional problems can include:

- Weight gain
- Increased levels of pain
- Sleep problems
- Reduced sex drive, erectile dysfunction, infertility
- Mood changes
- Immune system affected – increased risk of infections.

You should return unused opioid medications (codeine, dihydrocodeine, tramadol and morphine) to your local pharmacy 4 weeks after your operation.

This is to avoid any risks to you or your family members from having these strong pain killers at home.

