



The Possible Outcomes of Total Knee Replacement – What Can You Expect?

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Abstract: Total knee replacement is probably the most common orthopedic surgery of all times. Total knee replacement might not be the surgical intervention that will save your life, but it sure will improve the quality of it preventing you from becoming disabled for the rest of your life. It is the patients with knee arthritis, most often osteoarthritis that is in need of a total knee replacement. However, other conditions as well require a total knee replacement to be performed as well. The numbers of patients undergoing a total knee replacement surgery are increasing unfortunately due to the rise in arthritis case numbers.

Key words: knee replacement, outcomes, prognosis, old age, osteoarthritis

The numbers of patients undergoing a total knee replacement surgery are increasing unfortunately due to the rise in arthritis case numbers. Thinking about it, made us wonder why we have not yet posted an article that explains this common topic that draws so much attention over the years. Sure there are many of you out there who are looking into the possibility of a total knee replacement or you are already in the middle of the preparation process for your total knee replacement, right?

Well, why not use today's article to expand your knowledge on the topic and ever get some answers to questions that even you did not know you were wondering about. Let's start, shall we?

What do you need to know about Arthritis?

Before we proceed explaining everything that you need to know about total knee replacement, first let's go through the basic facts on the topic of arthritis. Did you know that there are over 100 different arthritis types with rheumatoid arthritis, gout, and osteoarthritis is the most common ones out there? And did you know that until today, despite the enormous progress of medicine the exact cause of arthritis is still unknown? Stiffness, joint pain, reduced the range of motion, and swelling is the most common symptoms of any

arthritis type, causing severe damaging to the affected joints. One or more joints at a time can be affected by these symptoms.

Osteoarthritis is one of the most dangerous types of arthritis and yet, one of the most common ones as wellⁱ. It causes severe deterioration to the affected joint or joints to the point where there is a need for a total knee replacement! Apart from total knee replacement surgery, arthritis is also treated with the use of medications and physical therapy, in order to improve the symptoms and the life of the patient. But let's discuss the process of total knee replacement now that we have covered the basics of arthritis.

What is total knee replacement?

Total knee replacement, also known as arthroplasty, is a commonly performedⁱⁱ surgical procedure during which the diseased joint, usually affected by some type of arthritis – with osteoarthritis being the most common cause, is replaced using the special artificial material. During the procedure, some of the bone and cartilage from the thighbone and shinbone are removed and replaced with metal implants. This replacement is performed in order for the common symptoms of arthritis to be reduced to a bare minimum so that everyday activities such as walking, running, sitting down, standing up and so on can be once again possible to be performed without any significant difficulty or an increase of the present symptoms. This procedure was first introduced back in 1968, and since then it has helped to save many troubled osteoarthritis patients in general, from their symptoms.

In fact, it has been considered that over 90% of the patients with osteoarthritis experience an improvement in their symptoms after the total knee replacement surgery has been performed. Just a quick reminder – total knee replacementⁱⁱⁱ will not cure your arthritis, but it will act upon reducing your symptoms and keeping them at a bare minimum for the rest of your life so that you can



function more normally despite having to deal with such a serious disease.

The recovery period after a total knee replacement

Total knee replacement is a time-consuming procedure, and so is the recovery period that follows. You are expected to spend at least three to five days at the hospital after the procedure is done, depending on your health condition. Later you will be assigned an individual treatment program that you will need to follow in order to achieve complete recovery. Usually, knee pain is to be felt in the period afterward.

If you do happen to feel pain, please do consider talking to your doctor about it so that he or she can prescribe you a proper painkiller to free you from the pain that you have been feeling. The different physical therapies will help you recover quickly and painless. Usually, electrotherapy, hydrotherapy, kinesitherapy and heat therapy are used. You will have to go back to your doctor for a monthly visit so that your doctor can make sure that everything is good with your new knee!

Is total knee replacement safe?

Total knee replacement is considered to be highly effective and safe procedure that is being used to treat the symptoms of arthritis, most commonly osteoarthritis. Although the total knee replacement is generally a safe procedure, it has been known to cause several different complications afterward of which you must discuss with your doctor.

The complications include infection, blood clots, pulmonary embolism, nerve damage, etc. Usually, these complications happen due to the insufficient medical care of factors such as age and other health problems of the patient that have not been taken into consideration. Other than that, in most cases, with the appropriate medical care, full recovery without any symptoms is to be expected and achieved. So to answer your question – yes, total knee replacement surgery is generally a safe procedure.

How long does a total knee replacement last?

It is expected for a single total knee replacement to last anywhere around 10 to 15 years depending on the age and health condition of the patient, the progress of the symptoms of arthritis, the quality of the materials that are used and the technique that the doctor has used as well. It has been considered

that in more than 90% of the cases the total knee replacement joint lasts for more than 15 years which is good news to be heard for both the patients and their doctors.

Talk to your doctor about the possibility of using high-quality, durable material that is in your range of expenses to make sure that you are getting the best thing possible and your money worth.

How much does total knee replacement cost?

The cost of the total knee replacement depends on the country where it has been performed and the health condition of the patient as well as from the health insurance that the patient has in the first place. Of course, you will have to pay some of it from your own pocket. Here you need to consider not only the procedure itself but also, things like hospital stay and physical therapy that you will require afterward in order to get back on track.

You can discuss all of these things and more with your doctor in order to get the idea of how exactly is a procedure such as this one going to cost. Keep in mind that we are talking about a highly effective, safe procedure that will undoubtedly improve the quality of your life, and despite not treating your arthritis, it will keep your symptoms as reduced as possible. So you see, perhaps it is worth it to give it a try and consider getting the procedure for yourself. Nowadays, total knee replacement is probably the best treatment plan for knee osteoarthritis that doctors and researchers all around the world have to offer.

What are the possible outcomes of total knee replacement?

As you can understand from what we have told you earlier in today's article, when it comes to a procedure such as total knee replacement is, mostly good outcomes^{iv} are expected to be seen. However, you have to understand that what we are talking about here is a variety of factors that are taking place and it is not only that the procedure itself is at stake so sometimes some complications can happen and a bad outcome can occur due to the presence of these complications.

Research published in the *Rheumatology*, back in 2005, gathered up a group of participants who were interviewed three months before the total knee replacement procedure took place and again six months later after the procedure has been conducted. What the participants revealed was



genuinely fascinating. Although they did happen to report the presence of their symptoms even after the procedure has successfully been done, the symptoms were there to stay, however, now, at a much lower rate^v.

The total knee replacement surgery has been reported to have a generally good outcome with a serious improvement of the arthritis symptoms. Another study [published](#) in the *Rheumatology* discussed the possible variability factors that have a specific role in the possible outcome of the total knee replacement procedure. These factors include pre-operative Oxford Knee Score (OKS), age, sex, BMI, diagnosis, the severity of symptoms and many other variability factors that need to be taken into consideration^{vi}. Another study published in the *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery*, explicitly [stated](#)^{vii} that patients with severe pain, severe functional limitation and presence of depression and/or anxiety symptoms are more likely to suffer from a bad outcome as compared to other patients with the same need of such procedure.

You see, although mostly good outcomes are expected to happen, we should always expect a possible bad outcome as well. If we expect a bad outcome as well as a good one, we will take the necessary preparation steps in order to reduce the risks of the possible bad outcome and with that, prevent the possible complications that will follow a bad outcome as well. If you are interested in preventing a bad outcome from happening, please do consult your doctor before the procedure takes place about any questions and worries that you might have. Do not forget to tell your doctor anything that is related to your health and especially to your arthritis symptoms and the affected joints. Even the smallest bit of information can make a huge difference and prevent a bad

outcome from happening. So to sum it up – total knee replacement surgery is a safe and highly-effective orthopedic surgery and probably one that most people are interested in.

Although it does come with the possibility of risks, very few people experience complications and bad outcomes, leaving most patients amazed at their good outcomes and reduced symptoms. We kindly recommend you getting a total knee replacement surgery and get some relief from your symptoms, that is if you are the right candidate for it that you will have to discuss about with your doctor.

Conclusion

Total knee replacement might not be a life-saving procedure, but it does have its benefits when it comes to effective symptom relief. By replacing the damaged parts of the knee joint with high-quality, durable materials, the medical team is able to act upon helping you get some relief from that annoying pain, stiffness, swelling and reduced range of motion that you have been experiencing due to knee osteoarthritis. And the good news is that total knee replacement is a totally safe procedure that mostly comes with positive, good outcomes and very few unsatisfied patients.

Most of the dissatisfaction that these patients have been feeling is due to the misunderstanding that they have, thinking that this procedure will cure their arthritis when that is not the case, so they go on experiencing the symptoms unsatisfied for the rest of their lives. We kindly recommend you to talk to your doctor about the possibility of getting a total knee replacement done and getting those annoying symptoms to a minimum as soon as possible. Help your body and yourself to get better with this safe, highly-effective procedure once and for all!

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