



Dear Sir or Madam:

Thank you for choosing Dr. Arnold and his staff to assist you with your surgical needs. We make it our goal to do our best to help you with any situations that you might have to make your experience with surgery a good one. This packet has been written to familiarize you with Total Knee Replacement Surgery. Please read all of the information in your surgery packet very carefully BEFORE your surgery date. Also, it is extremely important that you read all of your pre-op surgery instructions as soon as you can. These instructions are meant to help you get through the process to know exactly what to do and where to go.

Please be aware that although we try to give you an idea of surgical expectations, the information included in this packet is a general idea. Each one of our patients is different, as are their pre and post-operative experiences. Even though you may use this information as a guide, the instructions that you receive throughout your post-operative appointments are the instructions to follow.

We are here to assist you in every way possible that we can. If you have any questions, comments, or problems please call us.

Sincerely,

*The Staff of Arnold  
Orthopaedics &  
Sports Medicine*



## Preparing For Surgery

Your surgery will be scheduled at the earliest convenient date that is available to you. Dr. Arnold will discuss with you the risks and benefits involved with the surgery.

### STARTING NOW:

- **STOP SMOKING:** smoking reduces circulation to the skin and impedes healing
- **TAKE MULTIVITAMINS:** Start taking multivitamins daily to improve your general health once you have scheduled your surgery
- **TAKE VITAMIN C:** Start taking 500 mg of Vitamin C twice daily to promote healing
- **LIMIT VITAMIN E:** Limit your intake of Vitamin E to less than 400 iu per day.
- **CHECKLISTS:** Follow your pre-operative instruction checklist for the things that you will need to have done before your surgery.
- **PRE-ADMIT** to the facility (See the section on pre-admissions)

### PRE-OPERATIVE CHECKLIST (*INPATIENT SURGERY INSTRUCTIONS*)

You will be given a pre-operative checklist. Please use that as a reminder as what to do. The sooner you begin/complete the checklist the smoother the process as we get closer to your surgery date. The process includes

1. **MEDICAL CLEARANCE:** You should set up an appointment to meet with your primary care doctor and any medical specialist that you may see for he/she to give you a physical and medical clearance for your surgery. You should see your doctor well in advance of your surgery so that (s)he may perform any diagnostic tests that may be needed. All patients must have this clearance before surgery. If you do not have a primary care doctor, then you should choose one that is available to you and set an appointment as soon as you possibly can. *We MUST have a note from your physician(s) before your surgery stating you are medically cleared for surgery.* They are more than welcome to fax the note to our office or they may mail it. If your physician is familiar with you and does not require an office visit, this is o.k, provided they are comfortable with clearing you for the surgery.



2. **PRE-ADMISSION:** See the section below about pre-admission to your scheduled hospital. You will be having blood tests, as well as any needed X-rays, EKG's, etc needed for your surgery. This process may take up to several hours depending on the test's necessary. Please allow for enough time for this process.
  
3. **BLOOD DONATION:** If you have decided donate some of your own blood for the surgery then the Community Blood Center will contact you prior to your surgery in the time frame necessary for your donation. This will be done only after your initial blood work is completed, because being able to donate blood may depend on the results of the lab work. If you do choose to donate your own blood then we highly recommend that you begin taking an over the counter iron supplement 2-3 days before your first donation. You should take this supplement at least 2 times a day until your surgery date. This will help ensure that your blood levels remain at a safe range for your surgery. If you have not been contacted by the blood center by 3 ½ weeks before surgery, please contact our office.

Return to our clinic 7 – 14 days before your surgery date for your pre-operative appointment with us. We encourage any questions that you may have, and even though you will see Dr. Arnold before your surgery, this is more relaxed atmosphere in which to ask your questions that you may have.

Please know that it is your responsibility to ensure that all of the items are completed prior to your surgery date. Not completing, any one of these items could result in your surgery being cancelled and rescheduled at a later date.



## PRE-ADMISSION

You will need to Pre-Admit to the facility in which you are having your procedure done. The pre-admission appointments ensure that all laboratory work, and diagnostic studies are within normal limits and would not interfere with your planned surgical procedure. This appointment also allows you to have all paperwork such as admission forms completed before your surgery date, thus allowing you to arrive on your date to focus entirely on your surgery process. This appointment will mean an extended visit pre-operatively to your hospital.

To these appointments you should bring a list of all your current medications with their exact dosages and how many times a day you take them (This includes all over the counter medications and vitamins). Also, bring a list of your allergies, your current insurance cards, and any living will or advanced directives.

The Facilities to which you should pre-admit include:

1. Physician's Specialty Hospital – Fayetteville, AR  
479-571-7882: You should call to set up your appointment to pre-admit. Begin the admissions process at the admissions desk. This will take one to two hours depending on the tests needed. You may call with any questions.
2. Washington Regional Medical Center – Fayetteville, AR  
479-463-5982: You should call to set up your appointment to pre-admit. Begin the admissions process at the admissions desk. This will take one to two hours depending on the tests needed.

*It is up to you to contact the facility to fulfill the pre-admission process.*



## PREPARING YOUR HOME

After surgery, even the simple things in your home can become dangerous for you. Preparing your home before you go to surgery will help in your transition home. Look out for potential hazards such as throw rugs and electrical cords. It may be necessary to rearrange your furniture to make it easier to walk around safely. Some things that you can look for:

- Use a cart to move items you use frequently around your home
- Add pillows to a low chair to make it easier to get out of that chair
- Move electrical cords out of the way
- Remove throw rugs
- Keep items you use often within easy reach
- Watch for small pets and other objects on the floor

These are just a few things to prepare your home. The most important thing is to be aware of your movements as you go about your daily activities.

## THE WEEK BEFORE SURGERY

- **DO NOT TAKE ASPRIN, ARTHRITIS MEDICATIONS, OR BLOOD THINNERS.** Stop taking medications containing aspirin, anti-inflammatory medicines, or blood thinner medicines such as coumadin one week before surgery. Review the list of drugs containing aspirin and ibuprofen. Such drugs can cause bleeding problems during and after surgery. Instead, use medications containing acetaminophen (Tylenol)
- **ILLNESSES:** Please notify our office if you become ill such as a cold, chest congestion or if you begin running a fever within 2 weeks before surgery. We may need to see you or have your family physician see you before surgery.
- **SKIN IRRITATIONS:** Do not get any scratches, blemishes, or insect bites on your affected knee. It is very important to notify us if you develop a skin rash or cuts on your knee within 2 weeks of surgery. This may delay your surgery date and we may need to see you before surgery if this happens.
- **CLEANSING:** The night before surgery, shower and wash the surgical areas with an antibacterial soap (Dial, etc).
- **EATING AND DRINKING:** Do not eat or drink anything after 12:00 midnight. This includes water.



## THE MORNING OF SURGERY

- **SPECIAL INFORMATION:** DO NOT eat or drink anything!!! If you take a daily Blood Pressure medication or if you take a heart medication such as Digoxin you may take it with a sip of water in the early morning. Otherwise, no medicine may be taken that morning. Please clarify with the clinic nurse if you have any questions.
- **ORAL HYGIENE:** You may brush your teeth but do not swallow the water.
- **CLEANSING:** Shower and wash the surgical areas again with an antibacterial soap. Do not put on lotion, make-up, powder, or any type of cosmetic agent.
- **CLOTHING:** Wear only comfortable, loose-fitting clothing. Remove all jewelry. Please do not bring valuables with you.
- **CHECK IN:** You will need to be at your surgical facility two hours before your scheduled surgical time, unless the surgical center informs you otherwise. You may go by their time if it is different.

## GOING TO SURGERY

### THE OPERATING SUITE

- Going to the operating room is not a normal experience for most of us. Dr. Arnold and all of the professional staff caring for you recognize the natural anxiety with which most patients approach this step.
- Your surgery will be performed in a state-of-the-art operating room. Specialists using modern equipment and techniques will attend to you. The team includes a board-certified anesthesiologist or a CRNA (certified registered nurse anesthetist), a trained operating room nurse and a registered nurse in charge of the operating room.
- When you arrive at the center, you will be escorted to the surgery suite. You will be asked to change into a hospital gown.



- The anesthesiologist will meet with you before you enter the operating suite. They may talk with you about the placement of a regional block to assist with pain control after the surgery. This procedure is recommended by Dr. Arnold. There will be time for last minute questions.
- Once you enter the operating suite, the staff will do everything they can to make you feel secure. The nurse or the anesthesiologist will start an intravenous drip in your arm. To ensure your safety, our staff will connect you to monitoring devices. Medicines that will make you drowsy will flow through the tubing into a vein in your arm.

#### THE RECOVERY ROOM

- When your surgery has been completed and your dressings are in place, you will be moved to the recovery room. You will be connected to monitoring equipment constantly. During this period, a fully trained recovery room nurse will take care of you and remain with you at all times. The registered nurses in the recovery room are specially certified for advanced cardiac life support.
- Your stay in the recovery room will last from 30 minutes to 3 hours, depending on how soon you are ready to leave. Most patients are fully awake within 30-60 minutes after surgery but may not remember much about their stay in the recovery room.

#### POST-OPERATIVELY IN THE HOSPITAL

- After your stay in the recovery room you will be taken to the post-operative floor. There, nurses will monitor you needs. You will have a catheter to aid in urination.. You will have a device that gives you pain medicine as you need it. An intravenous line will be present to provide fluids and antibiotics to you. You also will be given special medicine to prevent blood clots. Usually you will stay on this floor for 3-5 days until you are ready to go home. Patients may be discharged when they are medically stable and they are independent with their physical therapy.
- After your stay on the post-operative floor you may be moved to the rehabilitation unit if further rehab is needed. This is not a move that everyone makes. There you will further the process of getting home and becoming independent. You will continue to have nursing staff to monitor your needs, the therapists assist you in getting back to your daily activities, there is a rehabilitation physician to assist you with your rehab needs, and Dr. Arnold continues to follow you for all of your orthopedic needs. Typically your stay on this unit may last 4-7 days or until you are ready to go home.



## **POST OPERATIVELY**

### WHAT TO EXPECT

- Pain and swelling are to be expected. At times the entire extremity that has been operated on may hurt and be swollen. This takes time for these symptoms to resolve. You may take your pain medicine as instructed. The pain medicine is to be used on an as needed basis, therefore take the medication only as you need to.
- Ice should be used for the first 48-72 hours after surgery. Keep the leg elevated with the ice pack on. The ice pack should also be used when you go home to assist in keeping the swelling to a minimum.
- You may feel nauseated after your surgery. Begin your diet with clear liquids such as 7-up for a few hours. If you do not feel nauseated you may progress to soft bland foods, and continue to progress your diet, as you feel comfortable. You may also take the medication provided for nausea, as you need to.
- The day after surgery you will begin using a Continuous Passive Motion (CPM) machine. This assists in regaining your range of motion to your affected knee.

### WHEN YOU GO HOME

When you go home, you will need to apply the movement skills you have learned in the hospital. Continue the home exercise program that was begun in the hospital by your physical therapist. Keep your home safe to avoid injuring your knee.

Even though you're in a different setting, use the same precautions that you learned in the hospital. Keep your knee in a safe position when walking, resting, sitting or standing.

Gradually increase how far, how long, and how many times a day you walk. After you walk, lie down, elevate your knee and place an ice pack on it to reduce swelling.

Your commitment to your exercise program is the key to full recovery.



#### WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- If you have swelling specifically to the calf and ankle, or if you have calf pain or redness. Please notify the clinic immediately.
- If you have a fever greater than 101 degrees or begin having chills please notify the clinic immediately.
- If you notice excessive bleeding, foul drainage, or excessive redness call the clinic immediately
- If you have any questions of unusual circumstances you may call the clinic to ask questions or notify to changes.

#### WHAT TO DO AFTER YOU GO HOME

- You will have TED hose on when you leave the hospital. If you do not have them on your operated leg, you should put the hose on that leg when you get home. You make take these off when you are up and around more than you are down at rest.
- Return to the clinic 7-14 days after the surgery for your post-operative appointment with Dr. Arnold. Your post operative appointment will be made for you when you leave the hospital
- If you need refills of your medicines you must call the clinic between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and between 8 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. on Fridays - although we will make every effort to expedite requests, all medication refills may take up to 48 hours to refill. Any medicines that you were taking before your surgery will need to be refilled by the practitioner who originally prescribed that medicine
- You should follow all instructions that you receive as you proceed with your post-operative visits with Dr. Arnold.
- All other questions should be directed to the clinic during business hours Monday through Friday. For emergencies the telephones are answered 24 hours a day, and there is always a physician on call.



#### HOME EQUIPMENT

All equipment for your home use will be arranged for you before you are discharged from the hospital.

#### DRIVING

Assuming you drive an automatic transmission, you may return to driving after your left knee replacement once you have discontinued narcotics. In regards to your right knee, you must not drive for at least six weeks and then you can return if you are off narcotics.

#### WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM YOUR KNEE

##### The First Month

- Use the device (s) you have to gain mobility i.e. walkers, canes, etc
- Use caution in ambulating as you will still begin getting used to your new knee
- Always think before you move to avoid injuring yourself
- Do not shower or bathe until the sutures or staples have been removed
- Utilize family members, friends or neighbors to help you in your everyday activities

##### Two to Six Months

- You will begin walking more normally and comfortably
- Although you may still be using an assistive device, eventually you should need no extra support.
- Daily exercise and walks will help keep the new knee strong and in good shape
- Within 6-8 weeks you should be able to resume more and more of your daily activities as your body allows you to.

##### One Year

- By one year most individuals can do all activities that they wish to do. Also, by this time many people are tend to not notice their knee replacement.

#### Antibiotic Information

It is very important that if you undergo any type of dental or invasive procedure that you are treated with prophylactic antibiotics one hour prior to your appointment. You may receive the antibiotics through your dentist, physician or our office if you provide a 24-hour notice. If you receive the antibiotics through our office it is still a good idea to inform your dentist or physician of your total joint.



## Insurance Questions

We often get asked questions concerning insurance and payment for services rendered. Our staff will be happy to assist in the insurance process as much as we can. We make every effort to accommodate your needs in an appropriate manner, but it is imperative that you provide us with all current insurance information

We will take care of all pre-certifications that may be required with your insurance policy. However, any questions with your benefits or for pre-existing conditions should be resolved between you and your insurance company. We highly recommend that you make contact with your insurance company prior to your surgery to verify your coverage and benefits.

You are responsible for your portion of your payments prior to your procedure. If you are unable to pay your portion in full, it is your responsibility to ensure that a payment plan is created with you. We will be happy to provide you with an estimated out-of-pocket responsibility.

We make every effort to confirm all network benefits, including facilities; however, it is your ultimate responsibility to ensure that the facility that your procedure is being performed at is within your network.

All surgery facilities that Dr. Arnold performs procedures at are separate entities from us. If you have questions concerning payments and /or benefits regarding those facilities, please direct your questions to those individual facilities.

Physician's Specialty Hospital/ Physician's Surgery Center in Fayetteville is a surgery center that Dr. Arnold has an ownership interest in. If you have any questions regarding this, including treatment at this or other facilities, please contact our office.

If you have any further questions or comments please contact our office



CHRISTOPHER A. ARNOLD M.D. • ARTHROSCOPIC & RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY OF THE SHOULDER, KNEE & HIP

## SKIN ABNORMALITIES

DO NOT get any skin abnormalities in the area of your surgery. If you experience ANY skin abnormalities including: insect bites, blemishes, pimples, rashes, scratches, etc in the area of your surgery (i.e. Knee, shoulder) you must let our office know. Even if these blemishes are normal for you, you must let us see them before your surgery. If we do not see these, then there is a good chance that your surgery would be postponed until the area is completely clear. Any blemish could potentially increase the risk of infection associated with surgery and it is our desire to lessen all risks that come with a surgical procedure. If you have any questions, please let us know.

If you are in need of any further information, please access our web site:

[www.arnoldknee.com](http://www.arnoldknee.com)

which has more patient education and overall information for you to look at