



## OrthoVirginia Virginia Beach

Dr. Ted Lambert, DO

### Post-operative exercises Total Knee Replacement

These series of simple exercises are to be done at home every hour that you are awake. In total, the exercises take about 8 minutes to complete. After completing the exercises, you should elevate your leg (toes above the heart) for the remainder of the hour and ice it for 20-30 minutes. This should be done every day for the first 2 weeks following your surgery. Mark completion of the exercise on the chart, there is a space for each exercise and day. Bring your filled out chart to your first post-operative appointment at Ortho Virginia.

#### EXERCISE #1 – WALK

This is a short walk from the couch (couch/chair/bed) to the bathroom, kitchen, or other nearby area of the house and back. Walking prevents blood clots and pneumonia that can commonly occur in patients after surgery. This walk should only take 1-2 minutes.

#### EXERCISE #2 – CALF PUMPS

Blood clots in the legs (called deep venous thrombosis, or DVT) are common after knee replacement surgery. They are preventable with the proper exercise regimen. Point your toes away from you (both legs) and hold for 5 seconds. This flexion of the calf muscles helps squeeze the blood in the calf veins and propel it back to the heart. Repeat this 10 times. This exercise, along with the blood thinner that you are taking (Aspirin or other), and the hourly walks, helps prevent blood clots.

#### EXERCISE #3 – KNEE EXTENTION

Sit in a chair with your heel on a short stool. Straighten your leg that is on the stool all the way and push your knee down with your hands. Hold this position for 5 seconds. It is normal to feel a tightness and pain in the back of the knee. Repeat this exercise 10 times. The other way to perform this is to lie flat on a bed, couch or floor. Straighten your knee all the way as if you are pushing the back of your knee into the ground. Your knee should be practically touching the surface under you. Hold this position for 5 seconds. Complete 10 repetitions of these or the seated version. This exercise is probably the most crucial one to master because it will help the knee get completely straight.

#### EXERCISE #4 – KNEE FLEXION

This exercise is done in a chair. Put your foot on the ground and bend your knee back as far as comfortable as if you want a 90° angle in your leg. Then, while keeping your foot on the floor, scoot forward in the chair a little to bend your knee more. Hold this position for 5 seconds. You should feel tightness and some pain in the front of the knee while doing this. This is completely normal. Complete 10 repetitions.

After completing all of the exercises, elevate your leg (with toes above head) for the remainder of the hour (about 50 minutes). You should complete this regimen every hour that you are awake for the first 2 weeks after surgery, as it will help reduce pain and complications after surgery.