Exercises and positioning following total KNEE replacement

As you recover from your knee replacement surgery, you must perform your exercises as instructed, continue with your walking program, and follow instructions regarding positioning your new joint.

Also, if you have access to a stationary bicycle, please include this in your exercise program, as instructed by your physical therapist. This can be very helpful in regaining the bend in your knee.

Please note that a gray dot in the illustration indicates the operated knee.

Positioning your new knee joint

• When resting in bed or sleeping, don’t put a pillow under your operated knee, unless you have been instructed to do so in order to perform a particular exercise. This can lead to an inability to straighten your knee and affect the way you walk.

• While sitting, your knee should be either elevated and straight (with your leg on a footstool) or bent at a right angle (with your foot resting on the floor). Do not sit for long periods of time with your knee in a slightly bent position. Repeatedly moving your knee from a straight to a bent position is very helpful.

• Avoid very low seating positions and use a chair that has arms that you can use to get into a standing position.

• If you are having trouble straightening your knee, and/or if you tend to sleep in a “fetal” (curled) position, you may need to wear a temporary knee splint at night to keep your knee straight. Talk to your therapist for more information.

• Three times a day, lie on a flat and firm surface with your leg stretched out flat. Put a towel roll under your heel. Stay in this position for 30 minutes.