Exercise and Knee Replacement Rehab Timeline

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Knee replacement rehabilitation varies for every body because it depends on how their body reacts to the new joint. Procedures have changed in recent years with rehab, doctors have patients walk on the first day and expect an 85 degree bend of the knee by second day post operation. Doctors release patients as soon as two days post-op. Patients have to pass tests such as step ups, hip lifts, and a long distance walk.

The procedure for rehab at home used to be laying in a knee flexion machine for hours at a time. Now it is home physical therapist sessions every other day working on bending and straightening the knee. Some of the exercises while the patients is still in the hospital include: ankle pumps, heel slide, and contracting the quadriceps and hamstrings all three sets three times a day.

Exercises that the physical therapist has the patient do include: high knee march, donkey kicks, and many balance exercises.

Physical therapy sessions after surgery can go up to four to eight weeks depending on how much success is gained.

Patients are walking normally under their own power, without crutches, in two to three weeks post operation.