

Clinical support for joint replacement surgeries

The idea of having joint replacement surgery can cause anxiety and fear. Our innovative clinical support services can help employees facing these surgeries to be better prepared before the procedure, manage the pain and improve their recovery.

Addressing concerns before surgery

When an employee opens a disability claim for a joint replacement surgery, an experienced surgical nurse contacts the employee to help them better understand the surgery and recovery, as well as discuss the employee's return to work plans. During the call, the nurse will:

- Identify any real or perceived barriers that the employee believes may interfere with either their surgery or recovery
- Help them prepare for daily living adjustments that will support their recovery
 - For example, if the employee doesn't have reliable transportation to go to physical therapy appointments, the nurse can suggest in-home visits or treatment at a rehabilitation center if they live alone
- Educate the employee on steps to mitigate the effect that any existing comorbidities may have on a smooth recovery
- Provide the employee with encouragement
- Offer information about employer benefits that may be helpful – such as health and wellness programs
- Discuss pre- and post-surgery expectations and ask for approval to contact them after their surgery

Supporting the recovery process

Two or three weeks after a joint replacement surgery, one of our surgical clinicians will contact the employee to check on their progress with physical therapy and pain management, and to discuss the plan for returning to work.

The nurse will also reinforce education about the recovery process, help the employee proactively handle any related concerns, and make sure they understand that if something is wrong, they should not wait until their next follow-up appointment. For example, if the employee has symptoms of a possible blood clot (e.g., chest pain, shortness of breath, and color changes or severe swelling in their extremities), the nurse will tell them to immediately call 911. If there are signs of infection, such as inflammation at the incision site and/or a low-grade fever, the nurse will advise them to contact their surgeon.

Advantages

Our clinical support for joint replacement surgeries provides several advantages:

- Increases the employee's understanding of the disability process
- Reduces the fear of surgery and recovery
- Increases the employee's compliance with treatment
- Helps facilitate a safe and prompt return to work

Our services in action

Our nurses provide valuable support and guidance for patients before and after surgery. Below are examples of how they have made the process better for two of our clients' employees.

Managing the anxiety and pain

A man who needed a knee replacement almost canceled his surgery because he was worried about the pain. When the nurse called him before surgery, they discussed his concerns and she walked him through the plan for pain management. She also suggested a wellness program offered by his employer to help with his anxiety. By the end of the call, he decided to go through with the surgery and to use the wellness program. When the nurse contacted him three weeks after the surgery, he reported that the anesthesia blocked the pain, he was following his pain medication schedule and was able to learn some coping techniques for his anxiety. By educating and equipping the employee in advance, the nurse helped him overcome his fear and manage the pain.

Focusing on healing

When one of our nurses contacted an employee two weeks after a knee replacement, he was angry and frustrated because there had been a delay in his disability pay since the surgery. His anger affected his ability to fully focus on his recovery. The nurse quickly resolved the issue with the help of the clinical and operations teams at Sedgwick. When she explained the plan to him, it relieved his anger and allowed him to start focusing on healing again.

We are here to help

In addition to our clinical support services for joint replacement surgeries, we also provide a compassionate care service for employees with long-term and progressive diseases, and behavioral health solutions.

Sedgwick has extensive experience helping employers manage short- and long-term disability claims. We focus on the employee's overall health and wellness and help guide them through the process. Taking care of people is at the heart of everything we do.

—

To learn more about our clinical support services for joint replacement surgeries, contact:

P. 800.625.6588 **E.** sedgwick@sedgwick.com

To learn more about our integrated and customized solutions, visit [SEDGWICK.COM](https://www.sedgwick.com)