

Dr. Vigdorichik created a “Natural Feeling” Knee Replacement protocol to help avoid complications and produce a quicker recovery. He creates a unique surgical plan customized to each patient based on their mobility and anatomy, recreating the knee to how it was when you were younger. Dr. Vigdorichik uses a computer/robot for all knee replacements to ensure optimal execution of the operation. He is a world leader in robotic-design, and trains surgeons from around the globe.

### **Total Knee Replacement FAQs**

1. **How long is the surgery?** Average surgical time is typically 1 hour. You could spend up to 2.5 hours in total in the operating room, which includes set up, anesthesia, positioning, surgery, and closure.
2. **What is the implant made of?** Most are ceramic vs. cobalt-chromium and titanium, with a polyethylene insert.
3. **What are some potential complications with knee replacement at HSS?**
  - Infection:** 0.2% - lowest in the country at HSS
  - Blood Transfusion:** 99.5% of patients do not need a blood transfusion with robotic surgery
  - Permanent Nerve Injury:** less than 1% (lateral to the incision will be numb – this is normal)
  - Blood Clots:** 0.01%
  - Blood Vessel injury:** 0.001%
  - Scar tissue Formation:** 2-4%. Our bodies heal with scar. Some people scar more than others and this is probably based on genetic predisposition. Some patients can develop excessive scar tissue formation called arthrofibrosis. This may require a procedure to help regain the range of motion.
4. **How many nights do I spend at the hospital?** We plan for most patients to go home with just an overnight stay.
5. **Will I be going home or to a rehab facility after surgery?** Home. We do not need to send patients to rehab facilities anymore with Dr. Vigdorichik’s surgical techniques.
6. **When will I walk?** The same day as your surgery! Most patients will use a walker for ~1 week, then a cane for ~3-4 weeks. At 6 weeks after surgery, you should be walking pretty normally.
7. **Do I have to do physical therapy after surgery?** We recommend 3 different types of physical therapy depending on your needs: on your own, virtual physical therapy, and in-person visits. Physical therapy is very important to prevent a stiff knee after the operation. The goal is full range of motion. You target 90 degrees by your 2nd-4th week.
8. **How long do I continue on my blood thinner AFTER surgery?** 6 weeks
9. **When can I fly?** Flying is not recommended until 6 weeks after surgery. Sooner, on a case-by-case basis.
10. **When can I drive?** You must be off pain medications and feel comfortable sitting without any issues. If you have surgery on your right knee, then you cannot drive for about 3-4 weeks. Left knee surgery, usually 2 weeks.
11. **What should I expect after surgery during my recovery?**
  - Swelling and bruising is normal for up to 6 weeks after surgery, but it will slowly improve over time.
12. **When can I shower?**
  - You may shower as soon as you get home from the hospital – the bandage is waterproof.
  - Do not scrub the incision. Be sure to pat the incision dry with a towel after showering.
  - Any submersion in water including a bath, Jacuzzi, hot tub or swimming pool is NOT permitted during the first 4 weeks after surgery.
13. **How long do I leave my dressing on?**
  - You may remove your dressing 1-week after you are discharged from the hospital.
  - If you have surgical glue, it will naturally dissipate within 2-4 weeks. Do not peel it off.
  - If you have staples, they can be removed by your visiting nurse at 2 weeks after your surgery.
14. **When can I return to work?** Most patients return to a desk job between 2-4 weeks. Labor-intensive jobs require an approval from the doctor before returning to work, but typically 4-6 weeks.
15. **When can I have a dental cleaning/dental work?** No dental work for 3 months after the procedure unless cleared by Dr. Vigdorichik. You MUST take antibiotics, 1 hour before any dental work.



Jonathan M. Vigdorichik, M.D.  
Hospital for Special Surgery  
535 East 70th Street, New York, NY 10021  
TEL: (212) 606-1992 FAX: (646) 797-8603  
Email: [JVoffice@hss.edu](mailto:JVoffice@hss.edu)

16. **What's next?** Follow up with your medical clearance to be sure YOU ARE cleared and ALL images have been completed. NO medical clearance = NO surgery.