Total Joint Replacement Prehabilitation: A Feasibility Study

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Repository Citation

Baima, Jennifer; Li, Elizabeth Z.; Doodlesack, Amanda; Most, Mathew J.; Metzmaker, Jeffrey; and Ayers, David C., "Total Joint Replacement Prehabilitation: A Feasibility Study" (2017). *Orthopedics and Physical Rehabilitation Publications and Presentations*. 182.  
https://escholarship.umassmed.edu/ortho_pp/182

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Total Joint Replacement Prehabilitation: A Feasibility Study

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Keywords
total joint replacement, hip replacement, knee replacement, pre-operative physical therapy, prehabilitation, rehabilitation

Comments

Co-authors Elizabeth Z. Li and Amanda Doodlesack are medical students at UMass Medical School.

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**Objectives**

We aimed to assess the feasibility of an independent exercise program at our institution as a pre-surgical intervention for total hip and knee arthroplasty as “bundle” reimbursements were starting for these surgeries.

**Methods**

All patients presenting to the participating surgeons were eligible for recruitment. Prospective observational design without randomization was utilized so that no subject would be denied these exercises. Participants were taught two exercises for hip or knee arthritis at their outpatient evaluation at least one week prior to surgery and instructed to perform them daily independently at home (see figures). Subjects were contacted three days to one month post-operatively and surveyed about discharge, frequency of exercise, and living status of alone or with others. Additional information was collected from the subject’s chart including age, BMI, and sex. Discharge outcomes were compared with pre-existing independent factors using univariate and multivariate analyses.

**Results**

A total of 80 subjects were followed with a home discharge rate of 78.75%.

- No significant adverse effects of exercise were observed.
- Univariate analysis showed that the presence of other people in the home showed a slight, but not significant, association with differences of discharge destination.
- 82.7% of subjects who live with others were discharged home versus 57% of subjects living alone. (LR chi-square: 3.84, p=0.15)
- Multivariate analysis showed a slight, but not significant, association between frequency of prehabilitation and discharge destination (OR=1.212; 95% CI, 0.960-1.530)
- BMI showed no associated difference in discharge destination.

Increased frequency of prehabilitation and presence of others at home showed slight associations with increased discharge to home, but were not significant. Increased exposure to prehabilitation (duration X frequency) trends toward more frequent home discharge.

**Discussion**

Independently performed prehabilitation may be offered as an alternative intervention with likely no significant adverse effect.

Larger numbers and a randomized controlled design are needed to determine likelihood of discharge home.