

Knee Replacement – A Patient's Perspective

NRAS founder and Patient Champion Ailsa Bosworth discusses her personal experiences with knee replacement.

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03/03/03: Ailsa Bosworth

Mr Allum performed a total knee replacement to my left knee at the end of November 2002. My knee had become extremely painful over a period of some months as the gap between the tibia and fibia had reduced until it was bone on bone. My left ankle goes over quite badly towards the right. I think this deformity is referred to as 'valgus' – it may be a term you have heard. Therefore the combination of that and my knee veering towards the right meant my whole leg was at an angle which was very visible when I walked. I was using crutches and getting up, and downstairs was a nightmare, especially at the end of a long day.

Having had a lot of surgery previously, including a hip replacement, I knew I would be in a fair bit of pain after the operation and I was. Also, the manipulation which they have to put you through on the operating table caused my left hip to flare, so mobilisation was delayed for a couple of days to give my hip a chance to settle down. My haemoglobin went down also leaving me feeling a bit weird, but that picked up after a few days without the need for a transfusion which I have had to have with previous operations on occasion.

I worked hard at the physio to get my knee bending. It is sore, and it is hard work, but it's worth it as, by the time I left hospital after 2 weeks, I could bend my knee through 85 degrees. I had about 3 or 4 visits back to the hospital to see the physio during which time I continued to work at bending and strengthening my knee, and when I had the post-op visit to Mr Allum, he was very pleased to find I could bend my knee through 105 degrees, which was more than I could bend it before the operation.

The thing which has delighted me even more than removing the pain and having something which looks vaguely like a knee again after so many years of permanent swelling is that my left leg has been straightened and consequently my posture improved, and I look better when I walk. My clothes hang better, and I feel more normal from that point of view. It's not just vanity it really matters.

I know I shall have to have the other knee done at some stage and whilst I shall not welcome the operation, if it turns out like my left knee, I shall be happy.



Left Knee – Front Left Knee – Side

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