

# Knee surgery stoplight tool

Which zone are you in today: **green**, **yellow** or **red**?

Doctor/Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



## Green Zone

**I'm feeling good.**

- My incision is closed, clean, and slightly pink with only a little swelling or tenderness.
- I am gradually increasing my activity each day.
- I am able to maintain an acceptable pain level with my current treatment plan.
- My acceptable pain range is \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_.
- I can rest comfortably.
- I am able to have regular bowel movements (BM).

## How I'll prevent symptoms today

**I will:**

- Keep my incision clean and care for it the way my doctor/provider has recommended.
- Use ice packs after activity and as recommended by my provider.
- Use my walker, cane, or other assistive device and only walk where paths are clear and free of tripping hazards.
- Do only the activities my doctor/provider/therapist says are safe, follow knee precautions, and continue my recommended exercises.
- Take my pain medicine as directed.
- Keep my doctor/provider appointments.
- Wear the brace my provider has recommended as directed (if applicable).
- Do my cough and deep breathing exercises or use hand-held breathing device.



## Yellow Zone

**I'm not feeling good.**

- I have changes in leg discomfort, swelling, or tenderness in the calf or thigh.
- I have a popping sound in my knee.
- I am not able to follow the instructions about how much weight I can put on my leg.
- My incision has liquid draining from it, looks red, feels warm, or has a bad smell.
- I am running a fever greater than 101°F, feel very cold, or have body aches.
- I have not had a regular bowel movement within the past 3 days.
- I am not able to maintain an acceptable pain range with my current treatment plan.

## Caution!

**Take action TODAY. I will:**

- Continue taking my medication as directed.
- Report these symptoms to my doctor/provider without delay **AND** call my doctor/provider if my symptoms do not improve after following my treatment plan.

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



## Red Zone

**I feel awful!**

- I have a sudden onset of numbness or tingling in my legs or feet.
- I have severe pain, warm to touch or severe swelling in my thigh or calf that does not get better with elevating my leg.
- I have trouble breathing or I am breathing fast, even when I am resting.
- I am having chest pain, arm or jaw pain/numbness.
- I had a fall after my knee surgery.

## Get help!

**Take action NOW.**

- **Call 911 or seek medical care RIGHT AWAY.**
- While getting help, do this:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_