

Your Guide to Wellness After Limb Loss

What you need to know for the first few months

MMC Limb Loss Care Pathway
Maine Medical Center

Maine Medical Center (MMC) Limb Loss Care Pathway

Meet the Team:

You will inherit a new Rehab Care Team that will consist of a Physiatrist (Rehab Medicine physician), prosthetist (specialist who makes artificial limbs), and physical and occupational therapists in addition to your PCP (primary care physician) and your surgeon.

Prior to surgery:

You will be evaluated by the surgical team and will likely meet with a Physiatrist to discuss your medical needs and goals for eventually using a prosthesis (artificial limb).

Day of Surgery:

You will have special instructions for activities immediately following your surgery. There may be a protective device (PORD) placed on your residual limb after surgery. Pain control and wound healing are the focus during this time.

Day 1-4 After Surgery:

You will likely be evaluated by a Physiatrist. You will be seen by physical and occupational therapists to begin the process of moving and getting adjusted to your recent surgery. You will also be seen by a Prosthetist (a healthcare clinician who specialize in prosthetics) to check the fit of your PORD as needed. Not all patients will have a PORD. You will be recommended for rehab after you leave the hospital. Your Surgeon, Physiatrist, and therapists will help determine the best setting for your rehab to occur.

Pre-Prosthetic Rehab:

Rehab can be performed in a variety of settings (home, rehab hospital, skilled nursing facility, etc.). The early focus of rehab is to promote wound healing, control pain, and begin shaping your residual limb. The goals are to improve your upper body strength, core muscles, opposite leg strength, and heart and lung function. In many cases, walking with a prosthesis will require more energy than walking with your limb prior to surgery. Your heart, lungs, and muscles need to be conditioned for this extra work. Pre-prosthetic rehab typically lasts 10-14 days. You should follow up with your prosthetist to adjust the fit of your PORD (if you were fit with one) as your residual limb heals and swelling decreases. Most patients will choose a Prosthetist with whom they will work with to eventually make their prosthesis (artificial limb) during this time.

Surgical follow up:

At Week 4-5 after your surgery, you will follow up with your surgeon and the staples or sutures will be removed. Your surgeon will determine if you are ready to begin the prosthetic fitting process and will coordinate with the Physiatrist.

Physiatrist Follow up and Prosthetic Measurement:

In your first post-operative office visit, you will see the Physiatrist in the Outpatient Rehabilitation Medicine clinic or via a Telehealth appointment. The Physiatrist will help you determine the next steps for your rehabilitation and

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recovery. They will help you plan where the therapy will take place and will coordinate the care amongst your Rehab Care Team. During this visit, you will also meet with your prosthetist. You, your Physiatrist, and your prosthetist will have further discussions regarding your medical conditions, goals for using a prosthesis, your progress in rehab, pain control, and healing so that the limb can be made specifically to help you accomplish your goals and begin making your prosthesis. The making of the prosthesis usually takes 3-4 weeks. You will meet with your prosthetist frequently to check the fit and alignment as the prosthesis is being custom made for you.

Prosthetic Rehab:

Once you obtain the prosthesis and your prosthetic fit is comfortable, you will begin the next phase of your rehab- learning to stand, transfer, and walk with the prosthesis. Your Physiatrist will work closely with you, your therapist, and your prosthetist to ensure you are making the expected progress and to help address any issues preventing you from doing so. Therapy typically involves 2-3 visits per week with your therapist and can last anywhere from 3-6 months. Some patients will progress faster and some slower. Taking the needed time for you to feel comfortable putting your prosthesis on, taking it off, and using it in your daily life is the most important part of this step- not how long it takes.

Maintenance:

You will periodically follow up with your Physiatrist periodically to ensure things are going well with your residual limb, that the prosthesis is functioning well for you, and to offer further advice and teaching on how to care for yourself in the future.

You will follow up with your Prosthetist for concerns regarding the fit of your prosthesis, prosthetic adjustments, new supplies, etc.

You may require occasional physical therapy “brush up” sessions to keep you active, safe, and mobile.

Driving:

If you have had an amputation and you want to get back to driving, you will need to discuss how to do so with your Physiatrist. Many patients with limb loss are still able to safely return to driving, but certain modifications to the vehicle and additional training may be required. Additionally, there may be some paperwork to submit to the Maine BMV, which your Physiatrist can also assist you with when the time comes.

Working:

You will work with your Physiatrist to determine if, when, and in what capacity you may return to work. Many patients with limb loss are able to return to work, but some modifications to work activities, schedule, and a gradual return may be needed.

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Accessibility Solutions (ramps, lifts, elevators)

Should you need a ramp to enter your home with a wheelchair, any of the following companies can assist you. There are financial grants, insurance allotments, and other programs that may be able to assist with funding. The companies below can assist you with this process.

Blackbear Medical: Accessibility Sales (rental and purchase) Portland: 800-577-1365, ext. 125

<http://www.blackbearmedical.com/Catalog/Online-Catalog-Category.aspx?cid=10936&sid=1841>

Maine Accessibility Corporation Portland: 207-767-5690

<http://www.maineaccessibility.com/Products/32/category/235>

Amramp Brunswick: 1-888-715-7598

<https://www.amramp.com/franchises/maine/>

Support and More Information:

Online: The Amputee Coalition of America provides numerous resources for patients with amputation including a peer support program. For more information, visit <http://www.amputee-coalition.org/> OR call 1-888-267-5569.

Locally: In Portland, you could attend the Amputee Support Group held monthly at Hanger Clinic, 959 Brighton Ave, Portland ME 04102. For more information, call 207-773-4963

Locally: You may also contact any prosthetic office for information on their Peer Support Program.

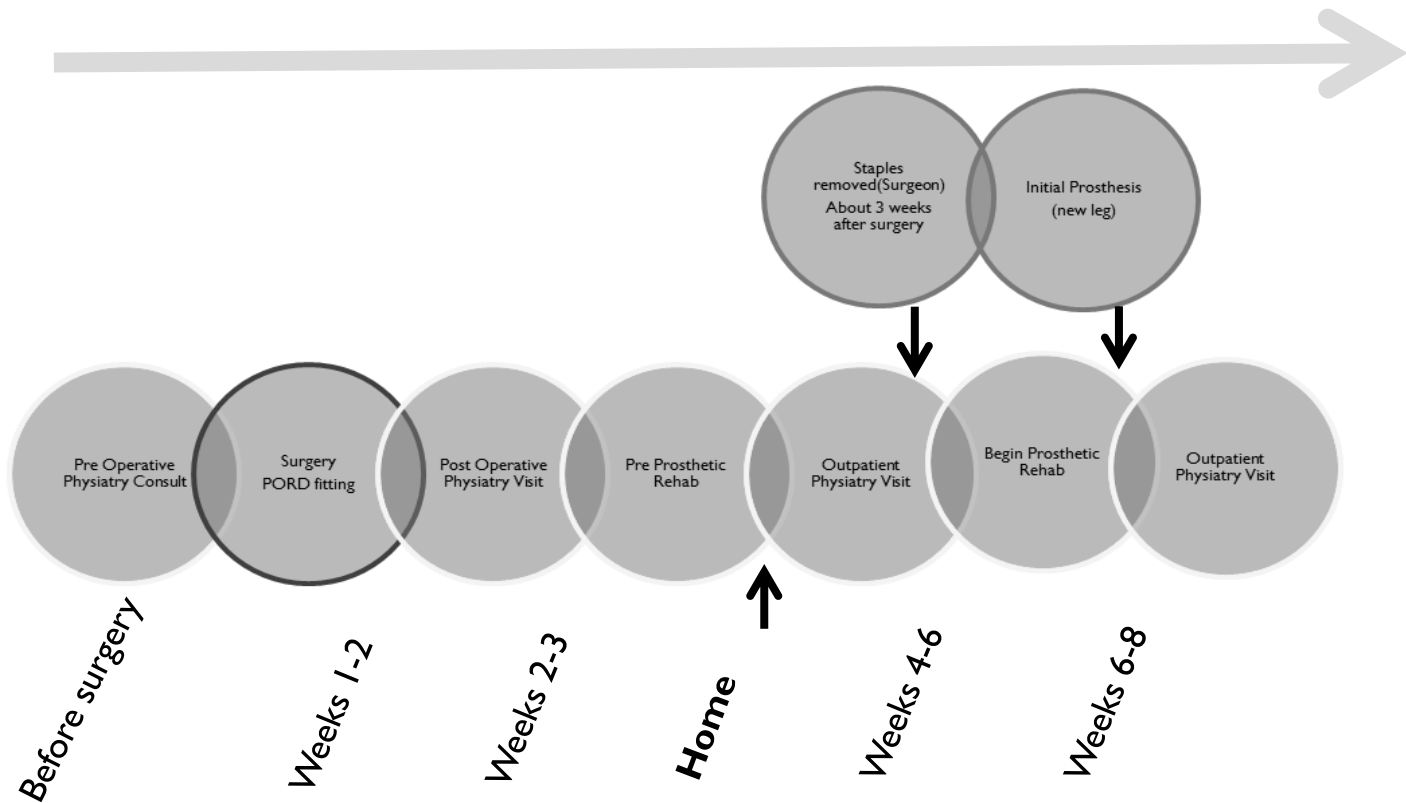
We look forward to being on this journey with you.

If you have questions regarding this process, please call us at:

***MMP Rehabilitation Medicine Clinic.
92 Campus Drive
Scarborough, ME 04074
207-885-0011***

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MMC Care Timeline



Where will I go to Rehab after my amputation? This is individualized, based upon your specific needs. Your therapists, case workers, and doctors will work together to determine the best level of rehab care for you. This may be done at an acute inpatient rehab hospital, a Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF), outpatient therapy office, or in your home- depending upon your specific needs and insurance coverage.

How long will I be in Rehab? Typically, patients are in Rehab (Pre-Prosthetic training) for 10-14 days prior to going home. After you have healed and once you receive your prosthesis, you will need a second course of therapy for Prosthetic training. This may take a few weeks.

When will my staples/sutures come out? Most are removed at the follow up surgery office visit, usually around 3-4 weeks after surgery

When do I get my new leg? When your incision is healed and your surgeon says you can begin to bear weight on your residual limb. Although each patient's rate of healing is different, most patients receive their first prosthesis 6-8 weeks after surgery. You will likely be measured at 3-4 weeks after surgery.

Where can I find more information? The Amputee Coalition of America offers a wealth of information on their website. <http://www.amputee-coalition.org/> Additionally, your Prosthetist, Therapists, and Physiatrist can provide more answers for you.

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Prosthetists (in alphabetical order)

Cunningham Prosthetic Care

<http://www.cunninghamprostheticcare.com/>

Location: Saco

Saco (Main location)

180 Main Street

Saco, ME 04072

Phone: (207) 558-6100

Fax (207) 494-7001

Hours: Monday - Thursday, 9 A.M. - 5 P.M.; Friday 9A-1P, or by appt.

Hanger Clinic

<http://www.hangerclinic.com/locations/Pages/Portland.aspx>

Locations: Portland, Waterville, Augusta, Auburn, Rockport, Bangor

PORTLAND (Main Location)

959 Brighton Avenue

Portland, ME 04102

Phone: (207) 773-4963

Fax: (207) 773-2912

Hours: Monday - Friday, 8 A.M. - 5 P.M.

*The Prosthetic offices listed above work very closely with our Limb Loss Care Pathway. We support your right to choose a prosthetist. If you have a desire to see a prosthetist not on the list above, please let us know and we will do our best to accommodate you.