

Orthopedic surgery in Thailand on your own

Exactly what to do, from planning your trip to full recovery.

Knee, hip, shoulder, spine and fracture surgery · Bangkok, Pattaya, Phuket, Chiang Mai

Researched by Elder Thai Staff · October 2026

Emergency in Thailand: call **1669**

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> **Emergency in Thailand: call 1669** (free national medical emergency line). Your hospital's own ambulance line may be faster. Bumrungrad emergency: **1378** from a Thai SIM, or **+66 2066 8888** from a foreign phone. Bangkok Hospital emergency: **1719** from a Thai mobile, or **+66 2310 3000** from a foreign phone. At admission, ask your own hospital for its 24-hour line.
>
> Reading time: about 18 minutes · Last updated: October 2026 · Researched by Elder Thai Staff
>
> Going through this alone? **Get a caregiver for the first days home →**

⇩ Download the full guide (PDF) ⇩ Download the printable checklist (PDF)

This guide is for you if you are having bone or joint surgery in Thailand, usually after flying in, and you will be recovering here without family around you. It tells you what to do and in what order. It does not replace your surgeon. Where your surgeon's instructions differ from this guide, follow your surgeon.

1. The short answer

Before you leave the hospital, get these four things settled:

1. **Your medicines.** Thai private hospitals prepare your take-home medicines in the hospital pharmacy and hand them to you at discharge, after the bill is settled. At Bumrungrad, for example (see its discharge process), the doctor prescribes them, the pharmacy prepares them, they go on your final bill, and you receive them with instructions as the last step before you leave. Check what is in the bag, how long it lasts, and where to get more.
2. **Your next appointment.** Before you leave, confirm your next appointment and get the date, time and clinic name on paper. If none is booked, ask the nurse to book it for you. Your first follow-up is also where you get your medical summary and, when you need one, a fit-to-fly certificate (Bumrungrad travel guide).
3. **Your movement rules.** Ask the physiotherapist and write down the answers:
   - How much weight can you put on the leg or arm?
   - How do you get in and out of bed, a car and the shower?
   - Which positions should you avoid, and for how long?
   - Which exercises, how many, how often?
4. **A video.** Ask the physio if you may film them showing you the exercises and the bed and toilet transfers. At home, alone and on painkillers, you will not remember everything.

A note on the Thai way. Thai hospitals are efficient, and discharge runs as a fixed sequence: doctor's summary, pharmacy, billing, insurer check, cashier, medicines (Bumrungrad's discharge steps). On a busy discharge day it is easy to miss details, so ask. Polite, direct questions are normal and welcome, and you have a right to clear information in a language you understand, as set out in Bumrungrad's patient rights.

2. Find your procedure

Thai private hospitals often keep you in a little longer than UK hospitals do. Your surgeon in Thailand sets your stay. Sources are Thai hospital pages, most of them in Thai.

Procedure	Typical stay in a Thai private hospital	Jump to
Total knee replacement	**3-5 days.** Bumrungrad says 3-5; Bangkok Hospital and Nakornthon Hospital say most patients stay 4-5. UK hospitals often discharge sooner, in 1-4 days.	How long to stay
Partial knee replacement	Usually shorter than a total knee. Ask your hospital for its own figure.	How long to stay
Total hip replacement	**About 1-3 days** with current techniques (Phyathai Hospital). The UK figure is similar.	How long to stay
Knee arthroscopy / ACL	**1-2 nights** (Samitivej). Many UK patients go home the same day.	How long to stay
Shoulder (arthroscopic, rotator cuff)	**1-2 nights**, then a sling for **4-6 weeks** (Samitivej).	How long to stay
Spine (decompression, discectomy, laminectomy, fusion)	**About 1-2 days** after a microdiscectomy (Bangkok Hospital Phuket). Larger operations such as fusion take longer.	How long to stay
Hip fracture repair	Usually unplanned, after a fall. Your team sets the stay.	When to call
Wrist / ankle fracture surgery	Varies. In a new plaster cast, most airlines ask you to wait 24 hours before a flight under 2 hours and 48 hours before a longer one. You can still confirm this with your hospital in Thailand.	How long to stay

Not sure you can manage alone? See what a caregiver does →

3. How long to stay in Thailand

The hard limit is not leaving hospital. It is when your surgeon in Thailand clears you to **fly home**. Both surgery and long flights raise your risk of blood clots in the leg (DVT) and lung (Ratchaphruek Hospital, in Thai).

What Thai hospitals say: - Ratchaphruek Hospital (in Thai) advises waiting **at least 7 days** after a knee replacement before flying, booking an extra-legroom seat, and asking the airline for a wheelchair if you need one. - Bumrungrad asks international patients for a Fit for Travel certificate from their doctor before flying home. - We found no Thai hospital that publishes a fixed waiting time for **long-haul** flights. Your surgeon decides, based on your operation and your clot risk.

Common international practice, where Thai hospitals publish no figure: - **Long-haul after a hip or knee replacement:** many orthopedic units, following UK aviation-medicine advice, suggest avoiding flights over 4 hours for about **3 months** (Royal Orthopaedic Hospital, NHS Scotland). The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons sets no fixed time and simply says to ask your doctor before flying. A 2023 review found no firm agreement between countries. - **After keyhole (arthroscopic) leg surgery:** a common rule is to avoid journeys over 4 hours for about **4 weeks** (NHS Scotland). - **In a new plaster cast:** most airlines ask you to wait **24 hours** before a flight under 2 hours and **48 hours** before a longer one, because the limb can swell inside the cast.

These are international norms, not Thai rules. You can still confirm with your hospital in Thailand, which knows your operation and your clot risk.

What this means for you: a short regional flight may be possible within 1-2 weeks if your surgeon agrees. A long-haul flight home is a bigger decision, so plan for a longer stay, book a flexible return flight, and let your surgeon set the date.

Before you fly: ask your doctor for a **Fit for Travel certificate** and a list of your medicines. At Bumrungrad the certificate is valid for **7 days from issue**, so time the appointment to your flight.

4. Your visa for that length of stay

Which options you have depends on your **nationality**. Some passports can enter visa-free, while others must get a visa before travelling. Choose a visa that covers your **whole recovery**, up to the day your surgeon clears you to fly, not just the operation date.

The main options:

- **Visa exemption (visa-free entry).** Since 15 September 2026, eligible nationalities get up to **30 days**, and it is meant for tourism (country list). This suits a short procedure such as an arthroscopy. It is risky for a joint replacement, because your surgeon may not clear you for a long-haul flight within 30 days (see how long to stay). Thai immigration charges 1,900 THB for an extension of stay, but it is granted at the officer's discretion, so don't count on it (immigration fees).
- **Tourist visa for medical treatment.** You apply before travelling, and it is meant for treatment shorter than about 60 days. This suits arthroscopy, ACL repair, fracture fixation, or a spine decompression with an uncomplicated recovery.
- **Non-Immigrant O for medical treatment.** This is for treatment longer than 60 days. You need a hospital appointment letter, the hospital's registration certificate and proof of funds. It is usually the best fit for hip or knee replacement and other long recoveries. A family member or carer can apply too, with a request from your treating physician.
- **Extension of stay for medical treatment, from inside Thailand.** This is your fallback if your surgeon says you are not fit to travel yet. You need a doctor's certificate. Immediate family can stay as your carers, but only one non-family caregiver can be listed. Bumrungrad's Business Center helps admitted patients with visa extensions.
- **DTV (Destination Thailand Visa).** Medical treatment is one of the qualifying purposes. It requires significant proof of funds. It is worth considering if you want a longer, flexible stay around surgery and recovery.
- **Retirement visa (Non-Immigrant O-A).** This is for people aged 50 and over. It allows a stay of up to 1 year, but you need about 800,000 THB in savings or 65,000 THB a month in income, plus health insurance of at least USD 100,000. It only makes sense if you plan to live in Thailand anyway. It is not a visa for a single operation.

Ask before you book. Rules change and depend on your passport, so get advice from a reputable agency such as **Thai Kru**. They will tell you which visa fits your nationality and recovery time, and can prepare and submit it for you. (Thai Kru is our sister visa service.)

5. Where to stay while you recover

Choose your recovery base before you fly. How easy it is to get around matters more than the star rating.

Look for: - a lift, and no steps at the entrance - a walk-in shower, not a bathtub - a chair with arms and a bed you can sit on with your feet flat on the floor. After a hip replacement, Thai hospitals advise a firm, high chair (not a sofa) and no squatting or very low toilets; a raised toilet seat helps (BPK 9 International Hospital, in Thai). - a fridge and microwave, or a kitchenette - a 24-hour front desk - a short drive to your hospital (aim for under 15 minutes)

Check the bathroom. Some condos and serviced apartments have a small step or lip into the bathroom or shower, and polished tile can be slippery when wet. Ask for photos before you book.

By city

Bangkok - Hospitals with orthopedic centres include: - Bumrungrad (Sukhumvit Soi 3) - Samitivej Sukhumvit (Sports and Orthopedic Center) - Bangkok Hospital - Near Bumrungrad, the hospital lists hotels with patient rates. Several are 130-300 m away, from about **1,705-3,000 THB a night** (hospital hotel list). Its Business Center can help arrange accommodation.

Pattaya - Bangkok Hospital Pattaya has an Orthopedic Center offering total knee, partial knee (UKA) and hip replacement. - Stay within a short drive of the hospital, and check traffic at the times you will travel to follow-up appointments.

Phuket - Bangkok Hospital Phuket has a JCI-certified Bone & Joint Center. It covers knee, hip and shoulder replacement, arthroscopy and spine surgery (Bangkok Spine Academy Phuket). - Choose a base near the hospital rather than a beach resort far away. Hilly villas and long resort walkways are hard on crutches.

Chiang Mai - Bangkok Hospital Chiang Mai's Bone and Joint Center offers arthroscopy and joint replacement, with spine, hip and knee, and sports medicine surgeons. - Chiang Mai Ram Hospital is listed by a medical-tourism directory as offering knee replacement, arthroscopy and spine surgery.

Elder Thai caregivers work in all four cities, including recovery in your hotel (see areas we serve).

6. What your stay may cost

These are published examples, not quotes. Always get an itemised written quote. Check: - whether the implant is included - the number of nights - whether take-home medicines are included - whether physiotherapy is included - the follow-up visits - what happens if there are complications

Item	Published example
Robotic knee or partial knee replacement (Samitivej)	**529,000 THB**: doctor and hospital fees, 4-day stay, implant. Excludes pre-op assessment and complications from existing conditions. Offer valid to 31 Dec 2026 (Samitivej package).
Robotic hip replacement (Samitivej)	**629,000 THB**, same terms.
Bumrungrad joint packages	2026 brochure lists robotic knee/hip packages including implant and standard packages **excluding** implant (Bumrungrad 2026 brochure).
Hotel near Bumrungrad	From about 1,705-6,500 THB per night (hospital-listed rates).
Home physiotherapy, Bangkok (KIN)	About 1,500-1,800 THB per session.

Item	Published example
Wheelchair rental, Bangkok (KIN)	From 2,600 THB per month; commode/transfer chair 300 THB per day or 3,500 per month (KIN rental prices).
Elder Thai caregiver	From 1,200 THB for 4 hours. See below

Insurance: at discharge the final bill goes to your insurer, even with a guarantee of payment. Expect co-pays, deductibles and exclusions. Without a direct-billing guarantee, expect to pay up front: Bangkok Hospital, for example, asks for a deposit at admission and the full estimated cost before surgery. Bumrungrad also explains when you may need to leave a deposit.

7. Getting ready before surgery

Your room

- Clear a straight path from bed to toilet. Remove loose mats.
- Put a night light by the bed and in the bathroom.
- Move everything you use daily to between waist and shoulder height. After a hip replacement, Thai hospitals advise against bending down to pick things up from the floor (BPK 9 Hospital, in Thai).
- Put a chair with arms where you will sit most.

Supplies (bought or rented in Thailand)

Item	Where
Walker or crutches	Usually provided or sold by your hospital. Ask your physio which you need. Also sold on Lazada and Shopee.
Shower chair, commode / raised toilet frame	Lazada and Shopee (search เก้าอี้อาบน้ำ for shower chair, เก้าอี้นั่งถ่าย for commode chair). Rental from KIN in Bangkok.
Wheelchair	Rent from KIN, with delivery in Bangkok.
Ice packs, long-handled grabber, slip-on shoes with grip	Lazada, Shopee, Boots/Watsons pharmacies
Compression stockings	Usually given by the hospital. No Thai hospital we found publishes how long to wear them. In common international practice, NICE recommends them in hospital until discharge alongside clot-prevention medicine after a hip replacement, and the AAOS says they may help reduce swelling at home. You can still confirm with your hospital in Thailand.

Pack loose shorts for a knee operation and a front-opening top for a shoulder. Bring stable trainers for walking practice (Bumrungrad packing list).

Food

Order through **Grab** or **LINE MAN** to the door; the front desk can bring it up. Stock water, fruit and easy breakfasts before surgery day.

Your caregiver

If you are alone, decide **before** surgery who will be with you for the first nights. That person could be a friend, a hospital patient attendant during your stay, or a home caregiver afterwards, including care in your hotel room. **See how Elder Thai covers the first week →**

8. Discharge day

Discharge at a large private hospital takes **several hours**: 1. doctor's summary 2. pharmacy 3. final bill prepared 4. insurer review 5. cashier 6. medicines handed over (Bumrungrad's discharge steps)

Standard discharge time at Bumrungrad is 12:00. Staying later costs extra.

Ask these, and get the answers written down:

Ask (English)	Thai (polite)
Can you write my medicines and times in English?	ช่วยเขียนชื่อยาและเวลากินเป็นภาษาอังกฤษให้หน่อยได้ไหมครับ/คะ
Is this all my medicine? How many days does it last?	ยามีครบทุกตัวแล้วใช่ไหม ทานได้กี่วันครับ/คะ
When is my next appointment? Which clinic?	นัดครั้งต่อไปวันไหน ที่คลินิกไหนครับ/คะ
How much weight can I put on my leg?	ขาข้างที่ผ่าตัดลงน้ำหนักได้แค่ไหนครับ/คะ
May I film the exercises?	ขอถ่ายวิดีโอตอนสอนท่ากายภาพบำบัดได้ไหมครับ/คะ
Who do I call at night if there is a problem?	ถ้ามีปัญหาตอนกลางคืน ควรโทรหาใครครับ/คะ

(End with ครับ *khrap* if you are a man, ค่ะ/คะ *kha* if you are a woman.)

If you live alone, say so clearly:

> "I am staying alone in a hotel. Nobody is with me tonight. Today I could not [get to the toilet alone / stand up from the chair]. What do you recommend?" ผม/ฉันพักอยู่โรงแรมคนเดียว คืนนี้ไม่มีใครดูแลครับ/ค่ะ

Name the specific task you struggled with. A clear fact gets a plan.

Before you go, also collect: - your medical summary report - receipts and claim forms if you will claim from insurance

9. Getting there and the first night

- **Transport:** book a car with room for your leg. Bumrungrad's customer service can help arrange transport. Sit sideways first, then swing your legs in, as your physio showed you.
- **On arrival:** unpack your medicines and set the first doses out from the **new** list. Put the phone and charger within reach of the bed.
- **Your first walk:** do the first walk to the bathroom while someone is there. How you manage that trip is the real test of whether you can cope alone.
- **The first night:** if you were unsteady on that walk, do not spend the first night alone. An overnight carer can sleep in or stay awake with you. **Arrange overnight cover →**

10. The first 72 hours

Each day: 1. Take your medicines on time, especially blood thinners if prescribed. Write each dose down. 2. Do the exercises from your video, little and often. 3. Walk short distances regularly. Moving helps prevent clots. 4. Keep the leg raised when resting (on 1-2 pillows under the calf, not under the knee, as Siriraj Hospital nurses advise after knee surgery, in Thai). 5. Keep the wound dry and covered as instructed. 6. Drink water. Thai hospitals advise drinking water to avoid dehydration (Bangkok Hospital, in Thai). 7. Check the warning signs morning and evening.

Hip patients: - Do not cross your legs. - Do not bend the hip past 90°. - Do not bend down to your feet. - Avoid low seats, sofas and very low toilets (use a raised seat), and never squat (BPK 9 Hospital, in Thai).

Shoulder patients: - Wear the sling as instructed. Taking it off too early can break the repair. - Do not push up on the operated arm when getting out of bed or a chair. This is common international practice (the AAOS says it needs forceful muscle contraction); you can still confirm with your hospital in Thailand.

Expect pain and swelling. Most people need help with shopping, laundry and meals at first. That is especially true one-handed after shoulder surgery, when you wear a sling for 4-6 weeks (Samitivej, in Thai).

Elder Thai's post-op monitoring covers exactly this window. **Want someone to handle the first 72 hours with you? →**

11. When to call

Call 1669 now (or your hospital's emergency line) if you:

- are short of breath or have chest pain, especially with leg pain or swelling. This can be a clot in the lung (Ratchaphruek Hospital and Pitsanuvej Hospital, in Thai).
- have fallen and cannot get up, or have hit your head
- cannot be woken properly, or are newly confused
- after spine surgery: have new leg weakness or numbness, or **cannot pass urine, or are newly leaking urine or stool**. Bangkok Hospital says to tell your doctor at once if you cannot pass urine after spine surgery (in Thai); the UK NHS treats loss of bladder or bowel control as an emergency

How to call 1669: say "English" when connected (calling 1669). Give what happened, your exact location, and a callback number. Do not hang up until the dispatcher tells you to (Bumrungrad emergency advice). If you struggle, hand the phone to hotel staff, or call the Tourist Police on 1155.

Your address in Thai. Write this down today and keep it by the phone:

> "ต้องการรถพยาบาล ผม/ฉันเพิ่งผ่าตัด[เข่า/สะโพก/หลัง/ไหล่] ที่อยู่คือ [hotel name in Thai], [street], ห้อง [room number], เบอร์โทร [your number]" (I need an ambulance. I just had [knee/hip/back/shoulder] surgery. The address is ...)

Call your surgeon's clinic today if you notice:

- throbbing pain or swelling in **one** calf or thigh, or red or darkened skin there (Ratchaphruek Hospital, in Thai)
- a wound that is hot, red, swollen or oozing (Bangkok Hospital, Ratchaphruek Hospital, in Thai)

- fever
- pain that is getting worse, not better
- missed or doubled doses
- dizziness when standing

Note it and mention it at your follow-up:

- mild swelling that settles with rest and raising the leg
- bruising
- stiffness in the morning

A caregiver watches these signs for you, every day →

12. Weeks 1 to 6, and cleared to fly

- **Day 14-20:** after a knee replacement, Bangkok Hospital usually closes the wound with dissolving stitches, so there is nothing to remove. Your doctor takes off the waterproof dressing around **day 14-20**, and you should not soak in a bath until about **5-6 weeks** (Bangkok Hospital, in Thai). Other hospitals use clips that are removed in clinic, often around day 10 in the UK. Ask which you have.
- **Weeks 1-6:**
  - Daily walking and your exercises.
  - Compression stockings, as instructed.
  - No driving while you take strong painkillers (Bangkok Hospital, in Thai), and not while you wear a sling. Your surgeon tells you when you may drive. In Thailand you will mostly use Grab or a driver anyway.
- **Home physiotherapy:** licensed physiotherapists do home visits in Bangkok. Ask your surgeon how many sessions you need.
- **Follow-up visit:** confirm the date. Ask for:
  - your medical report
  - any further medicine (buy it at the hospital pharmacy)
  - when you can fly
- **Before your flight:**
  - Get your Fit for Travel certificate (valid 7 days at Bumrungrad).
  - Pack your medicines in hand luggage.
  - Walk the aisle and flex your feet about every 30 minutes on the plane.
  - Drink water. Avoid alcohol, especially while you take painkillers (Bangkok Hospital, in Thai).

13. Mistakes people make

- **Booking the return flight for the week after surgery.** Plan to the guidance in section 3 and keep the ticket flexible.
- **Arriving with a visa that ends before your recovery does.** Sort the visa before you fly.
- **Assuming the package covers everything.** Implants, pre-op tests and complications are often outside the price.
- **Leaving without the movement rules in writing**, or without the exercises on video.
- **Picking a hotel for the view, not the bathroom.**

- **Spending the first night alone after struggling to reach the toilet.**
- **Skipping exercises because it hurts.** Bangkok Hospital calls daily knee-bending exercises the most important part of recovery, aiming for about 90° before you leave hospital (Bangkok Hospital, in Thai).

14. Thailand-specific notes

- **Home physio and nursing:** available by home visit in Bangkok.
- **Delivery:** Grab and LINE MAN cover food. Pharmacies (Boots, Watsons, local) sell basics. Prescription refills: go back to your hospital pharmacy. Bumrungrad's coordination office helps patients buy medication from the hospital, including after you return home.
- **Condos:** check for a step into the bathroom and slippery tile, and that the lift reaches your floor without stairs. Ask building security to let a carer or ambulance in.
- **Insurance:** many policies separate inpatient and outpatient cover. Some exclude pre-existing conditions. Ask your insurer before you fly whether elective surgery abroad is covered at all.
- **Hospital patient attendants:** while you are an inpatient, you can request one through the ward nurses.

15. An example (illustrative)

This example is made up to show how the plan fits together. It is not a real patient.

Anna, 67, flies from Melbourne for a knee replacement in Bangkok. - **Before booking:** she gets a written quote that includes the implant and 4 nights. She books a hotel 200 m from the hospital with a walk-in shower, and a flexible flight 12 weeks out. - **Visa:** a visa agency confirms the right visa for a 12-week stay before she books. - **Discharge day:** she films the physio and gets her medicine list written in English. She tells the nurse, "I am alone in a hotel tonight." - **At home:** a caregiver meets her at discharge and stays nights for the first week, then daytime blocks for two more. Home physio comes twice a week. - **Week 6:** the surgeon reviews her knee. She flies home after the review her surgeon set, with her Fit for Travel certificate and medical summary in her bag.

16. You'll know it's going well when...

- your pain is a little less each few days and your painkillers are working
- swelling goes down overnight with the leg raised
- the wound is dry, and the redness around it is shrinking
- you can walk a bit further each day with your walker or crutches
- you can manage the toilet and shower safely
- your follow-up date is confirmed, and you know how you will get there

If any of these goes the other way, call your surgeon's clinic.

17. Get a caregiver: Elder Thai after-surgery care

Recovering from orthopedic surgery alone in a hotel is possible. It is also where things slip: - a missed dose - a fall on the way to the bathroom - a wound nobody looks at

Elder Thai sends a trained, bilingual caregiver to your hotel, condo or serviced apartment, working to a plan set by our Nurse Coordinator.

What your caregiver does: - meets you on discharge day and walks through your discharge instructions with you - keeps your medicine schedule and a log, so nothing is missed or doubled - checks vital signs daily, and watches the wound, swelling and pain - helps you in and out of bed, the shower and the toilet, within your surgeon's limits - supports the exercises your physio prescribed - takes you to follow-up appointments and the pharmacy, and speaks Thai with hospital staff (hospital companion) - escalates early to the Nurse Coordinator if something looks wrong - watches you in the days before your flight, and gives you a written handover for your doctor at home

What we do not do: replace your doctor or hospital, or perform procedures. Registered nurses handle clinical tasks such as injections or complex dressings when the plan requires it (after-hospital care, orthopedic recovery care, joint replacement recovery, wound care at home).

How pricing works: you choose how many hours a day you need and for how many days. There is no fixed package. Many clients only need **4 or 8 hours a day**, for example mornings for showering, medicines and exercises, or a daytime block around appointments. Others want round-the-clock cover for the first nights, from an overnight carer or a live-in caregiver.

Hours per day	4 hours	8 hours	12 hours	24 hours
Price per day (THB)	1,200	2,200	2,500	3,500

Example (illustrative): 24-hour care for the first 3 nights, then 8 hours a day for 11 days = 3 x 3,500 + 11 x 2,200 = 34,700 THB.

Most people cover at least the first week or two, when the risk of going back to hospital is highest. Tell us your dates and we will quote your exact plan.

Where: Bangkok, Nonthaburi, Phuket, Chiang Mai and Pattaya.

How to start: send us your procedure, hospital, surgery date and where you will recover. Care usually starts within 24-48 hours of the plan being confirmed; plan before you fly, and we will be ready on discharge day.

Request after-surgery care · WhatsApp **+66 62 837 0302** · LINE · hello@elderthai.com

18. FAQs

How long should I stay in Thailand after a knee replacement? Most Thai private hospitals keep you in for 3-5 days (Bumrungrad). Ratchaphruek Hospital advises waiting at least 7 days before flying; for a long-haul flight home, your surgeon in Thailand sets the date. A common international practice is to avoid flights over 4 hours for about 3 months (Royal Orthopaedic Hospital), while the AAOS simply says to ask your doctor. You can still confirm with your hospital in Thailand. Plan to stay well beyond your hospital discharge, and book a flexible flight.

Can I hire a caregiver after surgery in a hotel? Yes. Elder Thai caregivers work in hotels, condos and serviced apartments.

How much does home care after surgery cost in Thailand? Elder Thai charges by hours per day: 1,200 THB for 4 hours, 2,200 for 8, and 3,500 for 24. Many people only need 4 or 8 hours a day. Home physiotherapy is around 1,500-1,800 THB a visit.

Do Thai hospitals give you medicines to take home? Yes. Take-home medicines are prescribed at discharge, prepared by the hospital pharmacy and added to your bill. Confirm how many days' supply you get.

Can I hire a nurse after surgery? Yes. Registered nurses can do home visits for clinical tasks, alongside a caregiver.

Do I need a visa for medical treatment in Thailand? It depends on your nationality and how long you stay. Ask a visa agency such as Thai Kru before booking. See section 4.

Printable checklist

Print this, stick it by the bed, and tick things off. The PDF has every item on one A4 page, plus the emergency numbers and a space for your address in Thai.

Printable one-page checklist: download the PDF.

⇩ Download the full guide (PDF) ⇩ Download the printable checklist (PDF)

Sources

- Bumrungrad: Emergency Center (ambulance numbers)
- Bumrungrad: medical travel guide (discharge, fit to fly, coordination)
- Bumrungrad: insurance payment and discharge process
- Bumrungrad: hotels near the hospital
- Bumrungrad: total knee replacement
- Samitivej: robotic knee and hip replacement program
- Bangkok Hospital: emergency service center
- Bangkok Hospital Pattaya orthopedic center, Phuket, Chiang Mai
- Thai government: 2026 visa exemption changes
- Thai MFA: Non-Immigrant O-A visa
- Thai immigration: fees
- Thailand.go.th: stay for medical treatment
- Thailand e-Visa: DTV
- KIN HomeCare: home physiotherapy and equipment rental
- Thai Kru visa services
- Elder Thai: after-hospital care and orthopedic recovery care
- Bangkok Hospital: knee replacement, stay 4-5 days (Thai)
- Bangkok Hospital: care after joint replacement (wound, painkillers, exercises) (Thai)
- Bangkok Hospital: spine surgery FAQ (Thai)
- Bangkok Hospital Phuket: micro-lumbar discectomy (Thai)
- Nakornthon Hospital: after knee replacement (Thai)
- Phyathai Hospital: hip replacement (Thai)
- BPK 9 International Hospital: after hip replacement (Thai)
- Samitivej: ACL surgery (Thai)

- Samitivej: arthroscopic shoulder surgery (Thai)
- Siriraj Hospital nursing: ACL care (Thai, PDF)
- Ratchaphruek Hospital: at home after knee replacement, flying, warning signs (Thai)
- Pitsanuvej Hospital: pulmonary embolism symptoms (Thai)

International practice (for gaps and comparison): - AAOS OrthoInfo: activities after knee replacement (air travel, stockings) - AAOS OrthoInfo: shoulder joint replacement - UK Civil Aviation Authority: surgical conditions and flying (casts) - NICE NG89: venous thromboembolism prevention - NHS: recovering from a knee replacement - NHS: recovering from a hip replacement - NHS: recovering from ACL surgery - NHS: lumbar decompression surgery - Royal Orthopaedic Hospital: travel, surgery and DVT - NHS Scotland: travel after lower-limb orthopaedic surgery - Cureus: air travel after hip and knee replacement