

Hip & Knee Second Opinion — Preparation Checklist

HipAndKnee.mx — Educational Resource

This checklist helps patients prepare for an educational second opinion before surgery or before revision. Educational only. Not medical advice. Individual evaluation is required. Results vary.

1. Records to send

- Most recent X-ray, MRI, or CT (on disc or PACS link with credentials)
- Radiology report (PDF)
- Operative report from any prior procedure
- Implant identification card or sticker (if previously replaced)
- Recent labs (CBC, ESR, CRP if infection concern)
- Current medication list and allergies
- Past medical history and comorbidities
- Prior physical therapy notes / progress
- Office visit notes from current surgeon

2. Questions to ask the second-opinion surgeon

- Do you agree with the diagnosis?
- Have all reasonable non-surgical options been tried?
- If surgery is appropriate, what implant or technique would you recommend, and why?
- What is your annual case volume for this procedure? (AAHKS)
- What complication and revision rates do you report?
- What is your follow-up plan, especially for traveling patients?
- If revision is being considered, what workup do you require (e.g., infection workup, alignment study)?

3. Red flags to discuss promptly

- Fever, chills, drainage from incision
- Sudden severe pain, instability, or inability to bear weight
- Calf swelling, chest pain, or shortness of breath
- Worsening function after prior surgery
- Loosening symptoms (start-up pain, mechanical symptoms)

4. When a second opinion is most useful

- Before any elective hip or knee replacement (AAOS shared decision-making)
- Before revision surgery (AAHKS)
- When non-surgical options have not been documented or tried
- When recommendations conflict between providers
- When considering travel for care or a self-pay program
- When the proposed implant or technique is unfamiliar

5. References

- AAOS OrthoInfo
- AAHKS Patient Education / Position Statements
- NIH / NLM
- JBJS
- PubMed peer-reviewed literature
- Choosing Wisely (ABIM Foundation)

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