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Shortening the Postoperative Length of Stay following Total Knee Arthroplasty does not Negatively Impact Short-term Patient Outcomes; a Retrospective Review of the Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Transitioning to Outpatient Total Knee Arthroplasty was a positive patient outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic

Safely Decreasing Postoperative Length of Stay for Total Knee Arthroplasty (TKA) Patients Following the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Introduction

- The demand for total knee arthroplasty (TKA) is rapidly increasing due to the obesity epidemic in the United States, the growing elderly population, and patients' desire to remain active.
- Opportunity to maximize resources: limiting postoperative length of stay (LOS).
- After the COVID-19 pandemic, our institution began outpatient TKA procedures via a collaborative multistakeholder approach with anesthesia, nursing, physical therapy, and care management.
- This study aims to compare postoperative outcomes before and after the pandemic with respect to the LOS in TKA patients.

Methods

- 1. Retrospective cohort study of all primary, unilateral TKA patients in 2019 (n = 757) and 2021 (n = 707).
- 2. Patient demographics, preoperative, perioperative, and postoperative data was collected from EPIC.
- 3. Statistical analysis was performed in Excel.





Results

- The average LOS for the 2021 cohort was 0.73 days shorter than the average LOS in the 2019 cohort (p < 0.001).
- There was no significant differences between groups in terms of transfusion rates, postoperative complications, 90-day hospital readmissions or 30-day ED visits.
- PROM scores at 6-weeks postoperatively showed no difference in pain, functional ability or patient satisfaction.

Discussion

- Decreasing the LOS after TKA due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 did not pose any increased risks within our 90-day study period when compared to the 2019 cohort.
- This collaborative approach between stakeholders demonstrates that LOS can be safely reduced without negatively impacting patient outcomes.

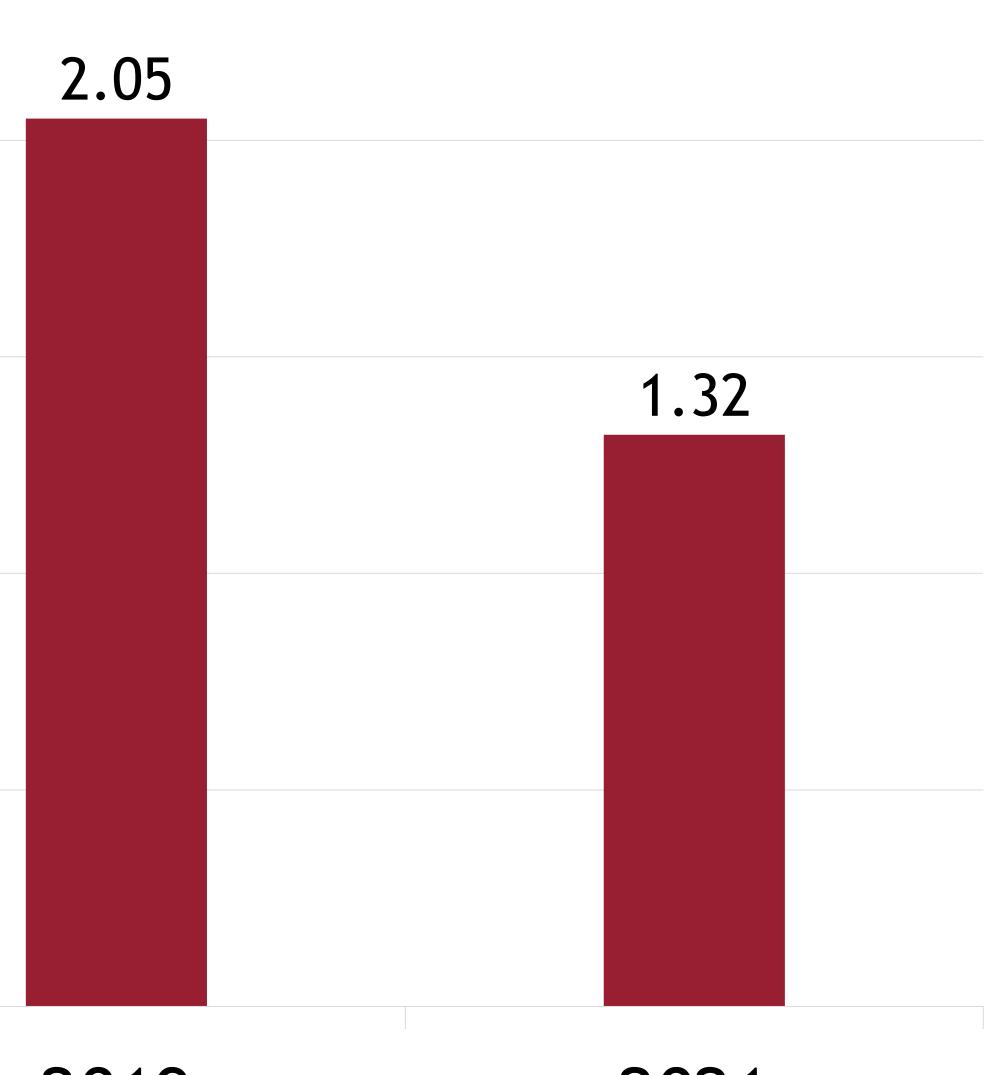
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Figure 1. Total Knee Arthroplasty average postoperative length of stay between 2019 (n = 757) and 2021 (n = 707) cohorts.

Total Knee Arthroplasty Average Length of Stay by Year



2019

2021

Surgery Year

