

Total Hip Replacement

Congratulations on your new hip replacement! We look forward to seeing your successful recovery and return to your active lifestyle. This document is here to help guide your recovery and may answer some common questions that patients have after hip replacement surgery.

Walking

It is recommended that you walk as much as you feel comfortable (at least 2-3 times a day), trying to walk a little further each time. You can walk inside or outside as you feel comfortable. As stated above, you will need a walker or cane for stability for the first 2-4 weeks as you adjust to your new hip. When you begin to feel that you don't need the cane anymore, you can begin to wean from the cane. This is typically around 4-6 weeks after surgery. You can stop using the cane for short distances and walk further and further without it. Each patient is different so do not worry if you feel more secure with a cane for longer period of time.

Motion

If you have an anterior hip replacement, you will not have any precautions. However, we do ask that you limit straight leg raises and combined extension and external rotation to reduce the inflammation around the surgical site.

If you have a posterior hip replacement, you will have pose avoidance precautions (pictures below) after your hip replacement. These are different from the traditional posterior hip precautions that were used in the past. The key position to avoid is combining hip flexion to 90 degrees, hip adduction and internal rotation. For example, putting on a shoe by reaching to the outside of your leg. We have attached a photo example of positions to avoid. This will reduce the risk of hip dislocation. We encourage you to sleep with a small pillow or towel

between your knees for the first 4-6 weeks. You can also share this with your therapist.



Courtesy: Eannucci EF et al. A Protocol of Pose Avoidance in Place of Hip Precautions After Posterior-Approach Total Hip Arthroplasty May Not Increase Risk of Post-operative Dislocation. *HSS J.* 2019

*If you have any problems or questions,
please call your doctor's office (8am-5pm).*

Answering service for after hours.

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Pain control

The first line of treatment we encourage is icing your new hip. You can do this in intervals, on for 30 minutes, off for 30 minutes. Most patients do this for about 10 cycles during the day. It is common to do most icing after therapy or at night. You may see skin irritation if you leave ice on for too long. This is a normal reaction and will resolve on its own.

Over time, you can try to wean from the pain medication, as there are side effects of long-term narcotic use. We have found that alternating medications can reduce the overall amount of narcotic pain medications. We suggest you take Tylenol and an anti-inflammatory medication (ex. Meloxicam) in between the interval for narcotic medications. Over time, we would like for you to increase the hours between the narcotic medication. We will provide more detail about what/when to take your medications when you receive your prescriptions.

Exercises

PHASE I (DAY 1 TO 1 MONTH POSTOP) – SIMPLE EXERCISES AND WALKING

This will be guided by your therapist. In the early phase, within the first 2 weeks after your surgery, we encourage you to perform 5 sets of 10 through the course of the day.

- Ankle pumps
- Quad sets (pressing the knee down)
- Gluteal squeezes

In next few weeks, about 3-6 weeks after surgery, we encourage you to add these exercises to your daily routine.

- Side raises (abduction) in a standing position and while lying on your side
- Hip extensions (moving the hip backwards) in a standing position

PHASE II (1 MONTH TO 3 MONTHS POSTOP) – STRETCHING.

It is common at this point to still have a feeling of stiffness, particularly if you have stayed in one position for too long. This is due to scar tissue that is formed after any surgery. We recommend changing position every 1-2 hours to avoid this feeling. During this phase, we will focus on stretching but also begin to incorporate light strengthening. Exercise equipment such as an elliptical machine or stationary bikes are good options to work on muscle endurance.

PHASE III (3 MONTHS TO 1 YEAR POSTOP) – STRENGTHENING.

In the next few months, we will focus on strength recovery. This will focus on your hip abductors, hip extension and flexion. It is normal if you notice your muscle is smaller after surgery but it will return! Over time, you can gradually return to sports. Remember to listen to your body. You can begin swinging a golf club or tennis racquet at about 3 months after surgery. With golf, you should work on your short game first. With tennis, you should hit ground strokes in place before chasing down balls. An improved range of motion will help with both of these sports. After completing outpatient PT, you can do some yoga to continue with stretching, if desired.

We encourage you to listen to your body during your recovery – if you feel pain during an exercise or directly afterwards, you may have overdone it. This is an estimated timeline for recovery and each patient has a unique course. The most important aspect is maintaining the longevity of your new hip replacement!

Frequently Asked Questions

When can I shower?

We use dissolvable stitching and skin glue to close your incision, so you can shower on the day after surgery! This dressing is waterproof and can be left on for 7 days postop. Do not immerse the incision under water for 6 weeks.

Why does my operated hip feel warmer than my other hip?

Warmth is a sign of inflammation, which is typical after surgery. Your body heals by bringing blood flow to the area with healing cells. It will take months for this process to complete and until then, there will be swelling and warmth around the area operated on.

When can I drive?

You should not drive as long as you are taking narcotic pain medication regularly. For most patients, this would be about 2-3 weeks post-op. You will also need to be able to work the gas and brake pedals. We encourage you to first practice driving, braking and parking before returning to the road.

Can I work out in the gym?

You can go to the gym and resume upper body workouts, as long as you are in a seated position.

When can I return to work?

It depends on your occupation. It is never a mistake to take more time off in the beginning of your recovery, as it will give you time to focus on your knee. We recommend taking at least 6-8 weeks off. Keep in mind that you may still be using a cane and it may be difficult to commute.

When can I go to the dentist?

If possible, wait until 12 months after surgery, as the hip is still healing and there is increased blood flow to this area. Please contact our office if you will need to see your dentist within a year after surgery and we will discuss additional precautions.

Can I travel?

If you are traveling by car, you should be sure to take frequent breaks so that you don't feel too stiff when getting up. We ask that you wait to fly until at least 4-6 weeks after surgery unless it is absolutely

necessary. Please call the office if you will be flying earlier than that after surgery.



**Stronger
starts
here.**

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