

### Hip replacement surgery

#### Introduction

A hip replacement is a common type of surgery where a worn or damaged hip joint is replaced with an artificial one. Replacement surgery is highly successful in reducing the pain and debilitating effects of worn or damaged hip joints. The operation involves replacing both the natural socket (the acetabulum) and the natural ball at the top of the thigh bone (femur) with artificial parts made of metal or plastic

Hip replacement surgery will only be offered to you after other options have been tried and have not relieved your symptoms. This would include medication to relieve the pain, weight loss if necessary, physiotherapy, and exercise to reduce stiffness and improve muscle strength and the use of walking aids.

Patients can go home as soon after surgery as they are deemed fit medically and they can cope with mobilising safely. This may be on the day of surgery or any time from the day after surgery. Some patients will have hip replacement surgery as a day case, meaning they don't have to stay in hospital overnight. Not every patient having a hip replacement is suitable for day case surgery but if you are a candidate this will have been discussed with you by your consultant.

#### Guidance for Patients

##### Lifestyle

We would encourage anyone waiting for surgery to lose some weight if necessary and to stop smoking. Both these measures are known to lower risk of complications following surgery. Visit our [While You Wait website](#) for information and advice.

##### Exercise

Whilst you are waiting for your surgery stay as active as you can. Strengthening the muscles around your hip will help your recovery. If you can, continue to do gentle exercise such as walking and swimming, in the weeks and months before your operation.

Versus Arthritis has produced a handy guide to exercise for hip pain – "[Exercises for hip pain](#)".

You may be referred to a physiotherapist who will give you helpful exercises. Here are some examples:

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## Active Hip Flexion

1. Stand up straight holding on to a wall or a chair
2. Lift your affected leg up in front of you as far as you can comfortably manage
3. Do not bring your leg up more than 90 degrees
4. Return to the starting position
5. Repeat 10 times x 3 times a day

## Active hip abduction

1. Stand up straight holding on to a wall or a chair
2. Keep your affected leg straight and lift it to the side as far as you can comfortably manage
3. Do not lean your body
4. Return to the starting position
5. Repeat 10 times x 3 times a day

## Active hip abduction

1. Stand up straight holding on to a wall or a chair
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5. Repeat 10 times x 3 times a day

## Active Hip extension

1. Stand up straight holding on to a wall or a chair
2. Keeping your affected leg straight, lift it back behind you as far as you can comfortably manage
3. Do not lean your body
4. Return to the starting position
5. Repeat 10 times x 3 times a day

## Bridge

1. Lie on your back with your legs bent and feet flat on the floor
2. Engage your core, and then start to lift your hips up into a bridge carefully starting at your tailbone, driving the movement with your buttocks
3. Repeat the movement with your other leg
4. Keep your hips up and level and your neck and shoulders relaxed
5. Carefully lower your back from the top of your spine down to your tailbone
6. Repeat this 10 times x 3 times a day

## Pain Management:

You can take pain relief such as Paracetamol, Anti-inflammatory creams, Codeine, Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. If you need any advice, your local pharmacy will be able to help.

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There are a number of resources to help you manage your pain:

- [10 ways to ease pain](#)
- [Escape Pain](#) is also a group-based rehabilitation programme for osteoarthritis of the knee and hip run by Life Leisure
- The Chartered Institute of Physiotherapy has produced helpful [guidance for managing pain and improving your quality of life](#)

### Mental health support:

It's important during this time to take care of your mind as well as your body. You might be feeling down, worried or anxious while you wait for your surgery. Remember it's okay to feel like this, these are normal reactions. There are a range of services available to help you manage during this time. Take a look at our [mental health support page](#) for more information.

### What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

This information is designed to help you manage your symptoms and stay in the best possible health while you wait. It is however possible that some of your symptoms may get worse while you are waiting for your surgery. There are some things to look out for that would indicate you should seek medical help:

1. If your pain gets worse to the point that it is unmanageable with the pain relief suggested by the pharmacist or doctor and you are struggling to cope with it;
2. If your mobility gets worse to the point you are off your feet or unable to work;
3. If your hip deteriorates suddenly

If you experience any of these issues we would recommend getting in touch with your hospital team. The number and email should be on your last hospital appointment letter.

Alternatively, you can contact your GP practice. Whilst your GP does not have access to the hospital waiting list to get you seen sooner, if your condition is getting worse they can assess you, give advice and can contact the hospital on your behalf if necessary.

### Links to more information

[NHS England information about hip replacement surgery](#)

[Versus Arthritis information about hip replacement surgery](#)