

Hip replacement

Introduction

We know that you are currently experiencing a long wait for your hip replacement operation and that this can be very difficult.

We have developed this advice and information to help support you whilst you wait. It is designed to help you manage your symptoms and to help prevent these from getting worse. It also provides information about what you should do if your symptoms do worsen.

This guide has been written by the national experts in hip replacement and draws on the latest evidence and advice about how best to support people waiting for your procedure.

It includes links to advice and information which you can click on if using online, and details with regard to helplines and other supportive websites.

You can also download and print this support guide and share with your family, friends and carers.

Waiting for your hip replacement

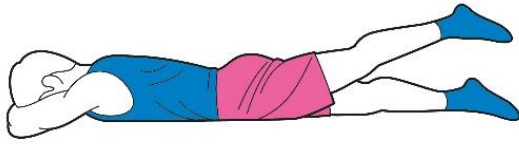
Our [pain management resource](#) includes advice to help you manage your ongoing pain. Prolonged waiting in pain can create [worries about money](#), [difficulties if you're a carer](#) and can impact your [mental health](#). Have a look at these links on this web platform for further advice and support if needed.

Versus Arthritis have produced useful information with regard to [living with arthritis](#) including changes you can make, and aids that you can use around the home that may help you better manage day to day tasks.

It is important to maintain movement and strength around your hip. You may have been given exercises to help previously and it is safe to continue these if you're able to. If not already doing so, the following [exercises](#) may help too. Start with those you find the easiest and then add a few more as you feel more confident. They may make your leg feel a bit tired and achy. If your pain increases, or keeps you awake

and this lasts for a few days you may have done too much. If this happens take a couple of days rest, and then as you feel better gradually start again.

Leg raise



Lie face down, though you might want to turn your head to one side if this is more comfortable. Tighten your stomach and buttock muscles to lift one leg slightly off the floor, while keeping your hips flat on the ground. Hold this position for 5 to 10

seconds and repeat 3 times.



Hip abduction (standing)

Stand with one hand resting on the back of a chair or a work surface for support. Lift your leg straight up to the side. Hold for five seconds and then slowly lower your leg. Try to keep your body straight throughout. Repeat five times on each side.

You can also do this exercise lying sideways.

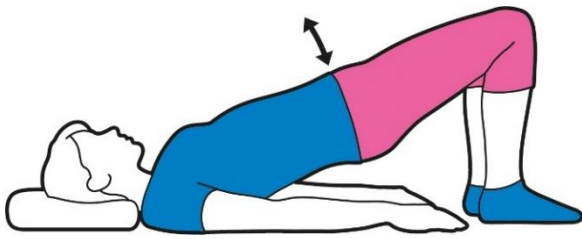


External hip rotation (sitting)

Sit with your knees bent and feet together. Press your knees down towards the floor using your hands as needed.

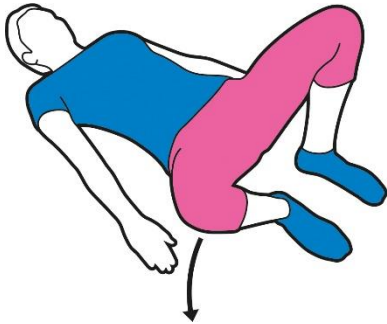
Alternatively, lie on your back and part your knees, keeping your feet together. Take the movement up to the point you feel a stretch, hold for around 10 seconds and relax. Repeat 5-10 times.

This may not be suitable for you if you've had recent hip surgery. Speak to a healthcare professional if you're unsure.



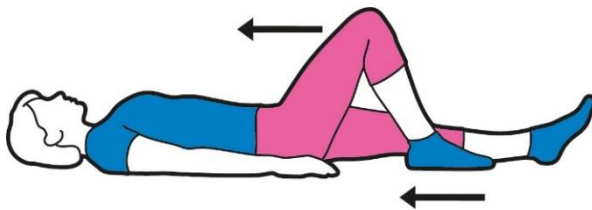
Bridging

Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor or bed. Lift your pelvis and lower back off the floor. Hold the position for five seconds and then lower down slowly.



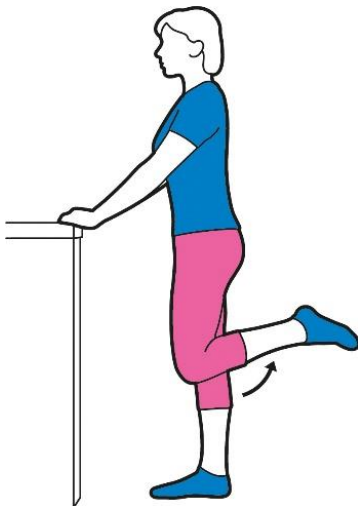
External hip rotation (lying)

Lie with your knees bent and feet flat on the bed, hip-width apart. Let one knee drop towards the bed then bring it back up. Keep your back flat on the bed throughout.



Heel slide

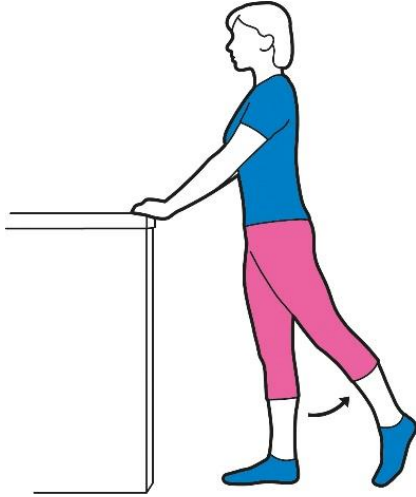
Lie on your back. Bend your leg and slide your knee towards your chest. Slide your heel down again and straighten your knee slowly.



Heel to buttock

Bend your knee to pull your heel up towards your bottom. Keep your knees in line and your kneecap pointing towards the floor.

Hip extension



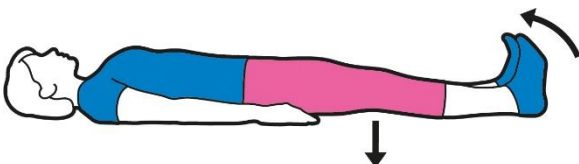
Move your leg backwards, keeping your knee straight. Clench your buttock tightly and hold for five seconds. Don't lean forward. Repeat with the other leg. Hold on to a chair or work surface for support.

Hip flexion



Hold on to a work surface and march on the spot to bring your knees up towards your chest alternately.

Quadriceps exercise

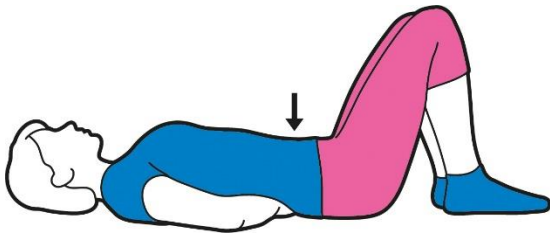


Pull your toes and ankles towards you, while keeping your leg straight and pushing your knee firmly against the floor. You should feel the tightness in the front of your leg. Hold for five seconds and relax. This exercise can be done from a sitting position as well, if you find this more comfortable.

Short arc quadriceps exercise



Roll up a towel and place it under your knee. Keep the back of your thigh on the towel and straighten your knee to raise your foot off the floor. Hold for five seconds and then lower slowly.



Stomach exercise

Lie on your back with your knees bent. Put your hands under the small of your back and pull your belly button down towards the floor or bed. Hold for 20 seconds.

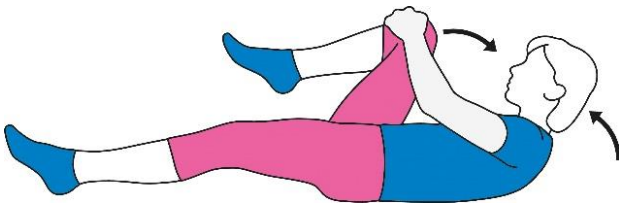


Squats

Hold onto a chair or work surface for support. Squat down until your kneecap is directly over your big toe. Your knees should not go in front of your toes. Return to your normal standing position.

Repeat until you can't do anymore, rest for one minute, then repeat another two times. As you improve, try to squat a little further, but don't bend your knees beyond a right angle.

Knee lift



Lie on your back. Pull each knee to your chest in turn, keeping the other leg straight. Take the movement up to the point you feel a stretch, hold for around 10 seconds and relax. Repeat 5-10 times. If this is difficult, try sliding

your heel along the floor towards your bottom to begin with, and when this feels comfortable try lifting your knee as above.

Being active is important for your overall physical and mental wellbeing. Whilst you may be limited by your hip, there is still a lot you can do. Take frequent short walks as you're able to and try and get out and about planning regular rest stops. If using a walking stick, use it in the opposite hand to the painful leg. You may find using two sticks easier. As with the suggested exercises above, a sign that you have done too much is if your pain and swelling increases or keeps you awake and this lasts a few days. If this happens rest for a couple of days and then as you feel better gradually get going again.

The [Lets move with Leon](#) programme from Versus Arthritis is also worth a look. The 12-week programme consists of 30-minute movement sessions, offering a holistic, full-body programme that will improve strength, flexibility and cardiovascular fitness. You don't need any special gear, and there's no cost. Leon specialises in working with people with arthritis and related conditions.

Arthritis Action has developed a range of exercises you can [try in a chair in your own home](#). The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy's [Stronger My Way](#) hub also provides advice, reassurance and helpful videos to help you maintain general strength to help you carry out day to day activities.

Many people with arthritis often find it easier to be active in the water. [Good Boost](#) run [water-based exercise sessions](#) across the country and has experience supporting those with arthritis awaiting joint replacement operations.

Find what works for you and it doesn't matter if you can't do some of the exercises because of your knee, any movement is good.

Maintaining a balanced diet and a healthy weight can also help. The Versus Arthritis [eating well with arthritis](#) information is worth a look. The NHS [lose weight](#) resource also has lots of support available including a free 12 week weight loss plan.

[Quitting smoking](#) is one of the best things you can do for your general health, and it will also help you recover better from your operations, so can [drinking less](#) alcohol.

What should I do if my hip is getting worse?

If your pain gets worse

If you experience a significant increase in pain or decrease in walking distance which does not improve over a week please contact your GP practice.

If you notice a sudden change of leg length

If you notice a sudden change in leg length along with a sudden increase in pain and difficulty walking please contact your orthopaedic surgical team.

Where can I find additional information?

Some people find it useful to speak to others with arthritis and/or waiting for their operation. Both [Versus Arthritis](#) and [Arthritis Action](#) run local groups and offer a range of other support services.

[Versus Arthritis](#) also have a free Helpline (0800 5200 520) which can provide information and support on a wide range of topics related to arthritis; it is available from Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm.

Useful websites

Arthritis Action www.arthritisaction.org.uk

NHS quitting smoking www.nhs.uk/better-health/quit-smoking/

NHS drink less

www.nhs.uk/better-health/drink-less/

NHS lose weight

www.nhs.uk/better-health/lose-weight/

Good Boost

www.goodboost.ai

Versus Arthritis

www.versusarthritis.org