

Hip Replacement Information

Introduction

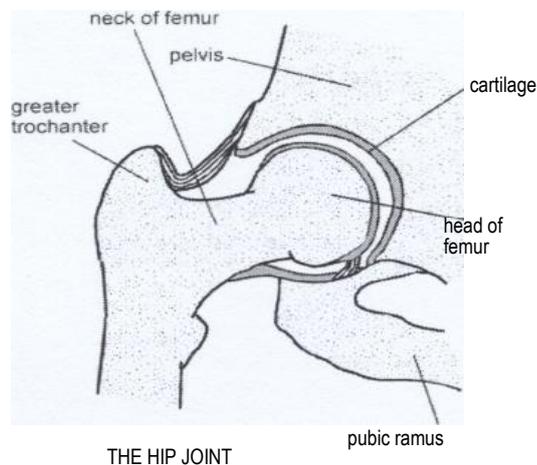
This information is designed as a guide for you as you prepare to have a Hip Replacement. There are a number of different procedures performed at this centre; this guide covers all types of surgery. If you have any queries regarding this information or your progress following surgery please contact the Physiotherapy Dept.

THE NORMAL HIP

The hip joint is a ball and socket joint that can move in many directions. The joint is made up of two bones. The ball part is on the top end of your thigh bone (head of femur) and the socket (acetabulum) is in your pelvis. The joint is surrounded by ligaments and muscles. Some of the muscles are inside and can't be seen easily but some are much more obvious. Your buttock is one of your hip joint muscles.

The surfaces of the joint are covered by a smooth slippery gristle called articular cartilage. There is also a very small amount of fluid which helps to lubricate the joint.

The Hip Joint



WHEN A HIP BECOMES ARTHRITIC:

Most hips need replacing due to 'wear and tear' arthritis, though some people may have Rheumatoid Arthritis which is a disease that can also affect other joints in your body. Many factors may contribute to having arthritis: Accidents, vigorous sport or a family history are just some reasons.

As the joint wears certain changes happen;

- the smooth slippery gristle surface (articular cartilage) becomes flaky and develops small cracks
- the bone underneath this articular cartilage becomes denser
- the lining of the joint becomes inflamed which can lead to pain and a throbbing sensation.

As the arthritis progresses you may:

- Hear grating noises because the smooth gristle surface wears so much the bones rub together.
- Become aware that the foot of your arthritic hip side is turned out and you can't turn it in.
- Notice that you have difficulty putting socks/tights on and are no longer able to cut your toe nails.
- Notice that your arthritic hip leg muscles are becoming wasted and your leg appears shorter than the other one.

These changes may result in pain, loss of movement and weakness in your leg muscles. This may lead you to walking with a limp which may also mean you have difficulty in walking and climbing stairs. Your sleep may also be disturbed.

WHAT IS A TOTAL HIP REPLACEMENT?

Total hip replacement is a surgical operation designed to replace a damaged or diseased hip joint. The total hip replacement will replace the damaged head of the femur and relines the socket (acetabulum). The new total joint aims to relieve pain, decrease stiffness and, in most cases, restore leg length, therefore helping to improve mobility.

WHAT IS A HIP RESURFACING?

Hip resurfacing involves replacing the damaged surfaces in the hip joint with metal surfaces. This is called a metal on metal hip resurfacing.

Less bone is removed during this procedure than in a Total Hip replacement. It is not suitable for everyone, but allows the hip to be converted to a Total Hip replacement in later years if necessary.

**Hip
resurfacing**



**Hip
replacement**



Before you come into hospital for your operation.

These suggestions may help to prepare you for your surgery and your return home.

- Place your clothes in drawers or shelves around waist height, to avoid bending after the operation.
- Arrange your kitchen so that regularly used items are within easy reach without you bending or stretching for them.
- It may be helpful to remove any loose rugs or electrical cords from pathways to prevent tripping.
- It may be beneficial to remove furniture or objects, which could obstruct easy access through doorways.
- Stock up on easily prepared food. If you have a freezer, have some prepared meals ready.
- Cut your toe nails, as you will not be able to reach them for about 12 weeks after the operation.
- Arrange for family or friends to help you with heavier household tasks like Hoovering and changing bed clothes. You may require help with these sorts of tasks for 12 weeks after coming home.
- If your usual chair is very low you will need to borrow a higher armchair from family or friends, which will be easier to get into and out of. It is advisable to sit only in a firm, high chair with armrests.
- Arrange for a family member or friend to take you home. It should be safe for you to travel home as a passenger in a normal sized car.

Please bring into hospital:

- Comfortable shoes that support your feet, and have a back to them. If possible, ensure that these will fit on over a thin pair of socks as feet often swell after the operation.
- At least one set of comfortable day clothes.
- Nightclothes and lightweight dressing gown.
- If you have any long handled dressing aids or walking aids, please bring them with you.
- Any other items discussed at your pre assessment appointment.