

Dos and Don'ts Following Hip Replacement Surgery

This leaflet outlines the things you should and shouldn't do following hip replacement surgery.

Carry out these everyday activities the right way, and it will help you to protect your hip and make healing and rehabilitation better and faster. It will also help reduce the risk of injury which could lead to pain and setbacks in your recovery.

1. SIT TO STAND

When rising from a seated position you must place the foot of your operated leg in front of the other foot. Put most of the weight through your arms and the non-operated leg as you push up into a standing position. Use the arms of the chair to push on as you stand - these are more stable than using your walker or crutches. Once standing, then take hold of your crutches or walker.



- Avoid pivoting on the operated leg
- Keep your nose and toes facing in the same direction.
- When walking or standing, keep your toes facing forwards, avoid walking with your toes pointing inwards, or outwards.

2. DO NOT BEND YOUR HIP PAST 90°

- Avoid sitting on soft or low furniture or low beds
- Do not bring your knee towards your chest
- Do not squat
- Do not reach forward while sitting
- Do not reach for items on the floor; use a long-handled reacher
- Use a sock aid to put on socks and shoes
- Use elastic shoelaces.



3. DO NOT CROSS YOUR LEGS

- While sitting, do not cross your legs at the knees or the ankles.
- In bed, use pillows between your legs when lying on your side.
- Do not let the operated leg fall over the other leg.



4. DO NOT TWIST ON YOUR OPERATED LEG

- When turning, step around rather than twist at the waist



5. DO NOT JAR YOUR HIP

- Avoid slippery surfaces
- Wear shoes with a non-slip sole
- Avoid impact activities like dancing, jumping and sports for the initial few weeks until your physical therapist and surgeon give you the go ahead.



6. DO NOT PUSH OR CARRY HEAVY ITEMS



7. CAR TRANSFERS

- On longer journeys try to have a break every 45 – 60 minutes, to stretch and mobilise, otherwise your hip will become stiff
- Where possible try to avoid sports cars or very low-riding cars with sunken seats – this will cause you to bend your hip past 90° and you may hurt yourself
- It is not normally allowed or recommended for you to be the driver until 8 weeks post-surgery.



Getting into a car

- Be sure the passenger seat is pushed all the way back
- Recline the seat a little
- With your walking aid in front of you, slowly back up to the car seat.

- Sit in the car seat. You may need to use cushions or blankets to raise the seat height if it is lower than permitted.
- Move your legs into the car. Lean back if you need to, to help clear your feet if you are struggling to fully bend your hip. Sometimes using a plastic bag under your bottom will help you slide around more easily and reduce twisting forces on your hip. It's best to remove the plastic bag once driving to avoid sliding around.

Getting out of a car

- Push the seat all the way back
- Recline the seat a little
- Lift your legs out. Lean back if you need to help clear your feet if you are struggling to fully bend your hip. Place your walking aid in front of you and stand up (bearing more weight on the unaffected (good) leg as this is your stronger leg to push up on).

8. FLYING

- Firstly get cleared by your doctor or surgeon when it is safe to fly
- Book an aisle seat making sure it's on the side that will allow your operated leg to be stretched out in the aisle
- Take regular breaks to walk and stretch and do your circulation exercises as advised
- Request passenger assistance to avoid walking kilometres through the airport.



9. SLEEPING

- Lie on your non-operated side for the first 4 to 6 weeks following surgery. Make sure you have a pillow



between your legs, (don't let the top, operated leg cross or drop over the bottom leg). You may want a second pillow to support your foot and ankle

- When you lie on your back, you must have a pillow between your legs, do not cross your legs.

10. SEXUAL ACTIVITY



- For positioning during sexual relations, make sure to consult your surgeon. Intercourse may be resumed approximately 3 weeks after surgery, following the precautions outlined by your doctor.

11. BATHING

- For bathing, do not attempt to get into the bathtub to take a bath or to use an overhead shower in the bath. The excessive bending at the hips needed to get into and out of the bathtub should be avoided.
- Use a walk-in type shower with a stool or seat so you can sit, and reduce the risk of slipping, or take a sponge bath until 11 or more days following your surgery where you may be more mobile to step into/out of a bath.



12. KNEELING DOWN

- If you have to kneel down (which is better than bending right over), kneel on your operated (bad) knee side.
- This allows your operated hip to stay straight and ensures you use the good leg which is bent to do the work of pushing up afterwards.



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