

Sports Therapy  
Manual Therapy  
Electrotherapy  
Manipulation  
Rehabilitation  
Pre-habilitation  
Clinical Pilates  
Pre-Season Screening  
Exercise Prescription  
Massage

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# Your Total Hip Joint Replacement at St Vincent's Private Hospital, Kew

## The role of Physiotherapy

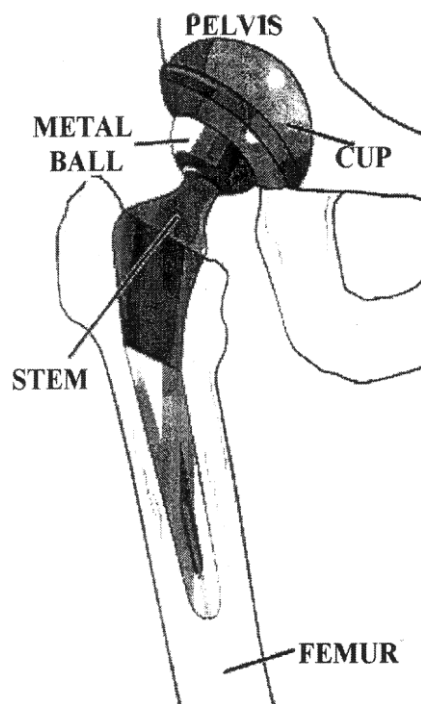


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## **What is a total hip replacement?**

A total hip replacement is a surgical procedure whereby the diseased hip joint is replaced with artificial material. The hip is a ball and socket joint, which provides motion at the point where the thigh meets the pelvis. During a total hip replacement, the end of the femur bone is removed and is replaced with a metal ball. The socket in the pelvis is replaced with a metal cup with a plastic and ceramic liner.



### **Who should have a hip replacement?**

Total hip replacement is considered for patients whose hip joints have been damaged by progressive arthritis, trauma or other destructive diseases of the joint. The most common reason for hip replacement in Australia is severe osteoarthritis. The recommended time to have a replacement is when the arthritic pain is so severe that it becomes too difficult to perform the activities of daily life.

## What Physiotherapy do I have while I am in hospital and what does it involve?

**Physiotherapy is an extremely important part of rehabilitation** You will have physiotherapy at least once daily during your stay in hospital. Ideally we would like you to do your exercises another 2-3 times throughout the day on your own or with the assistance of the nursing staff.

### The following is a general guide of what physio will involve each day:

#### Day 1

- You will generally rest in bed on the first day following surgery but may be stood at your surgeons request
- You will be expected to perform some gentle bed exercises

#### Day 2

- Your bed exercises (strength and knee range of movement) are progressed
- You will stand up with the aid of a frame and the physiotherapist and walk a few steps if you are capable.



#### Day 3

- Continue exercises. New exercises will be added when you are ready to progress.
- You will start to walk further distances today including to and from the bathroom throughout the day
- You will sit out of bed for your meals.



#### Day 4

- You will be taught how to use the crutches today and can use them to ambulate around the ward.
- We still encourage you to use the frame in wet areas such as the shower and at night time.
- Continue exercises 3-4 times per day



#### Day 5-7

- Practice of walking and transferring will help to increase your confidence.
- Exercises continue 3-4 times per day
- You will learn how to independently negotiate stairs.
- You will usually be discharged home during this period, once all goals have been achieved.



## What precautions do I have following a total hip joint replacement?

At first some movements will put too much strain on your new hip joint, which could cause the ball to slip from its socket. There are some movements you will need to avoid for 6 weeks to prevent dislocation of the hip.

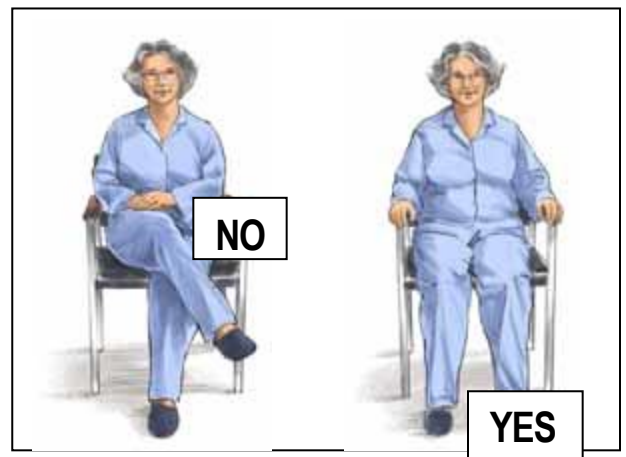
### 1. Don't lift your leg up towards you past a right angle

- No sitting in low chairs- keep knees below hips as a general rule
- No bending to pick things up from floor
- Use a pick up stick

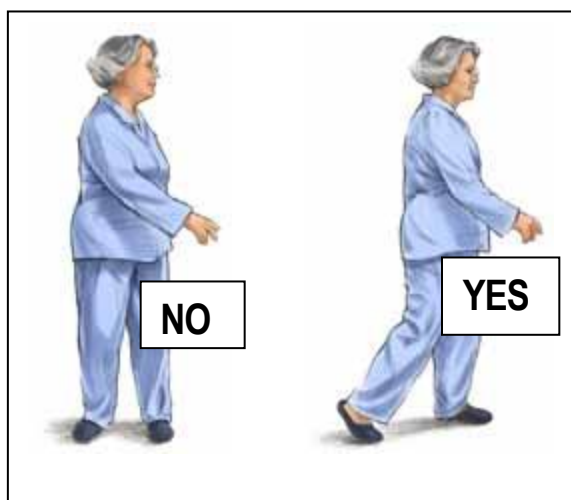


### 2. Don't let your knee cross the midline of your body.

- Always get out of bed to the side you have had operated on  
*i.e. L hip = L side of the bed*
- No crossing legs in bed or when sitting
- Must sleep on your back



### 3. Don't rotate your new hip inward.



- Do not twist to turn around
- Must take small steps to turn

## **What is the aim of the exercises?**

There are two main aims of the exercises following a total hip joint replacement.

### **1. To get the hip moving**

- The hip joint replacement will initially feel stiff. The exercises aim to start to gently move the joint in different directions to ensure you regain full movement and function in your hip.

### **2. To strengthen the muscles around the hip**

- The muscles around the hip get cut through during surgery and as a result are weakened following your operation. It is important to get them activated quickly after surgery and continue to build strength as your rehabilitation continues

## **When am I ready to leave hospital?**

Your surgeon will have the final say on when you can be discharged from hospital but from a physiotherapy point of view you need to achieve the following things before you can go home

- ✓ Transfer in and out of bed independently
- ✓ Walk safely with the crutches more than 50m
- ✓ Safely and independently negotiate stairs
- ✓ Be independent with exercise program

On average people are in hospital for 5-7 days following a hip joint replacement.

## **Do I continue with physiotherapy once I leave hospital?**

We will give you a home exercise program on the day that you are going home. On it will be all the exercises that you have already been doing whilst in hospital. You should continue with those exercises 3-4 times per day at home.

You should continue with the home exercises given to you in hospital for the first 6 weeks of your recovery until the review with your surgeon. At this stage your surgeon will direct you regarding continuing physiotherapy. Physio will be able to progress your exercises and assist you with moving forward with your rehabilitation.

**Please contact us at Hawthorn Physio Clinic if we can assist you with your continuing rehabilitation on 9819 2827.**

Another great form of continuing your rehabilitation is with HYDROTHERAPY. Hydrotherapy is simply exercising in water. It can be great to relieve the aches and pain of traditional exercising. You can commence hydrotherapy 6 weeks post surgery



## Will I need any special equipment at home?

- Crutches will be needed for the first 6 weeks. These are available to hire or purchase from Vimy Private Hospital. Your physiotherapist can organise this for you when you are ready to use the crutches.
- You will require a shower chair and toilet seat aid for the first 6 weeks at home. They are to ensure you are not sitting too low in accordance to your hip precautions. These are not available for hire from the hospital but some places we recommend are

- Able Medical Hire 9808 4999 Surrey Hills & Heidelberg
- LifeHealthCare 9384 1846 Brunswick East



## What can I do prior to surgery to prepare myself?

Preparing mentally and physically for surgery is an important step towards a successful result. We find that patients who come well prepared cope better during the recovery period and have fewer problems.

One of the best ways to prepare for your hip replacement is to do a program of **Prehabilitation**.

Prehabilitation is an exercise program aiming to prepare you both mentally and physically for the demands of surgery. It will help you improve your fitness, improve your strength in both arms and legs, improve your knee's flexibility, and gain fitness in a supervised gentle gym setting. These exercises will make it easier to mobilise following surgery, speed up your recovery of strength and range of movement, and lead to smoother recovery.

**At HAWTHORN PHYSIO CLINIC we offer a special prehabilitation program for all patients who are going to undergo their surgery at Vimy Private Hospital. If you undertake a minimum of 4 prehabilitation sessions at our clinic prior to your surgery we will claim the sessions on your private health insurance and just take the rebate. That means NO OUT OF POCKET EXPENSE for you!**

It is also a fantastic opportunity to become familiar with the Vimy hospital physiotherapists. We have a great environment where you will meet other patients, and we can answer any further questions you have along the way which will also help reduce anxiety and increase your preparedness.

**Call us on 9819 2827 to book your prehabilitation sessions today.**

## **Commonly Asked Questions**

- **When can I stop using the crutches?**

Most people are required to use crutches for 3-6 weeks following surgery.

*You will be able to walk without crutches when:*

1. You are confident you can manage on your own
2. You can walk un-aided without a limp
3. You can walk un-aided without pain and swelling

- **When can I go back to work?**

You may be able to return to pre-operative employment depending on the demands of your work environment

*Climbing ladders, heavy lifting and other activities involving excessive strain on the knee are not encouraged*

- **Can I play sport?**

It is best to ask your surgeon at approx your 3 month review about returning to sport. It will usually depend on the intensity of the activity.

- **When can I drive?**

You will not be allowed to drive a car for up to 6 weeks following your surgery as the knee control required to do so is not present. Long distance travel in a car should be avoided for the first month following your surgery as this may cause excessive swelling in your operated leg.

- **How long does pain and swelling last?**

**Pain** - Pain after a total hip replacement usually decreases rapidly during the first month. Feeling on and off stiffness in the hip is not uncommon throughout your recovery. Give yourself 12 months following surgery for all these symptoms to completely subside

**Swelling** - Swelling in your feet occurs if you keep your legs in a dependent position for long periods of time. This can be improved by spending time with your feet elevated.

- **How much exercise should I do and how can I tell if I've done too much?**

It is important to complete your home exercise program and progress your activity levels. However, in order to give your hip the time required to heal, you need to balance activity and rest and avoid over-exercise. You will know if you have over-exercised if your hip is painful following activity. Night time pain is also an indication of overdoing things throughout the day.

If you have any questions regarding your upcoming surgery please do not hesitate to call our physiotherapists. We are happy to help with any of your concerns.

Contact us on 9819 2827 (Hawthorn Physiotherapy Clinic)

## PHYSIO STAFF

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