

OS01lite Total Hip Replacement

This document will give you information about a total hip replacement. If you have any questions, you should ask your GP or other relevant health professional.

What is arthritis?

Arthritis is a group of conditions that cause damage to one or more joints.

The most common type of arthritis is osteoarthritis, where there is gradual wear and tear of a joint. Some other types of arthritis are associated with inflammation of the joints.

Arthritis eventually wears away the normal cartilage covering the surface of the joint and the bone underneath becomes damaged. This causes joint pain and stiffness.

What are the benefits of surgery?

If your hip replacement is successful, you should have less pain and be able to walk more easily.

Are there any alternatives to surgery?

Simple painkillers such as paracetamol and anti-inflammatory painkillers such as ibuprofen can help control the pain. Supplements to your diet may also help relieve your symptoms. You should check with your doctor before you take supplements.

Using a walking stick can make walking easier, as can a small shoe-raise.

Regular moderate exercise can help to reduce stiffness.

A steroid injection into the hip joint can sometimes reduce pain and stiffness.

All of these measures become less effective as your arthritis gets worse.

What does the operation involve?

A variety of anaesthetic techniques are possible. The operation usually takes between an hour and an hour and a half.

Your surgeon will make a cut on the side of your hip and remove the damaged ball and socket. They will replace these with an artificial ball and socket made of metal, plastic, ceramic, or a combination of these materials (see figure 1).

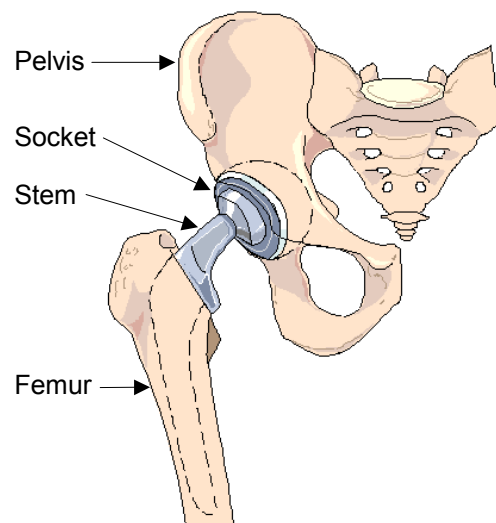


Figure 1
Hip replacement

An acrylic cement or special coatings on the hip replacement bond it directly to the bone.

What complications can happen?

1 General complications of any operation

- Pain
- Bleeding
- Infection of the surgical site (wound)
- Unsightly scarring
- Blood clots
- Difficulty passing urine
- Chest infection
- Heart attack
- Stroke

2 Specific complications of this operation

- Split in the femur
- Damage to nerves
- Damage to blood vessels
- Infection in the hip
- Loosening
- Bone forming in muscles around the hip replacement
- Dislocation
- Leg length difference

How soon will I recover?

You should be able to go home after four to seven days.

You will need to use crutches or walking sticks for a few weeks.

Regular exercise should help you to return to normal activities as soon as possible. Before you start exercising, you should ask a member of the healthcare team or your GP for advice.

Most people make a good recovery, have less pain and can move about better. An artificial hip never feels quite the same as a normal hip and it is important to look after it in the long term.

A hip replacement can wear out with time.

Summary

In a few cases, arthritis of the hip is the result of a previous hip injury or rheumatoid arthritis. Usually it happens without a known cause. If you suffer severe pain, stiffness and disability, a hip replacement should reduce your pain and help you to walk more easily.

Further information

- NHS smoking helpline on 0800 022 4332 and at www.smokefree.nhs.uk
- www.eatwell.gov.uk – for advice on maintaining a healthy weight
- www.eidoactive.co.uk – for information on how exercise can help you
- www.aboutmyhealth.org – for support and information you can trust
- American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons at www.aaos.org
- Arthritis Research Campaign on 0870 850 500 and at www.arc.org.uk
- www.hipreplacement.co.uk

- Mayo Clinic at www.mayoclinic.com
- NHS Direct on 0845 46 47 (0845 606 46 47 – textphone)

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