

Total Hip Replacement — Pre-Operative Patient Guide

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Hip Arthritis — Total Hip Arthroplasty

Your Condition & Procedure

The condition

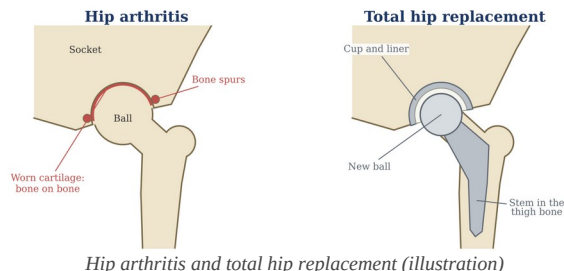
Hip arthritis is the wearing away of the smooth **cartilage** that covers the ball and socket of the hip. As it thins, bone rubs on bone, causing groin or hip pain, stiffness, and a limp, and making walking, putting on shoes, and sleeping difficult.

The surgery

Total hip replacement is done through an incision at the front, side, or back of the hip; unless otherwise specified, Dr. Wollenman will perform this through the front. The worn ball is replaced with a metal or ceramic ball on a metal stem in the thigh bone, and the socket is lined with a metal shell and a smooth ultra-strength plastic liner.

Risks & benefits

Benefits: Most patients have major pain relief and walk and sleep better. **Risks** are uncommon and include infection, blood clots, dislocation, a leg-length difference, loosening or wear of the implants, infection of the implant, fracture around the implant, injury to nearby structures (such as nerves or blood vessels), stiffness, persistent pain, and the need for further surgery. These will be reviewed with you in detail before surgery.



Hip arthritis and total hip replacement (illustration)

Before Surgery

- **Medications:** We will tell you what to stop and when (e.g., blood thinners, anti-inflammatories, some supplements, weight-loss injections).
- **Fasting:** Follow the instructions from your surgery coordinator/facility. In general, you should have nothing to eat or drink starting at midnight the night before surgery.
- **Nicotine:** Stop all nicotine products—they slow healing.
- **Equipment:** A walker (and later a cane) is typically arranged beforehand.
- **Physical therapy:** Typically begins within the first few days after surgery; your care team will help arrange it.
- **Home:** Plan for a helper for the first few days and remove trip hazards (loose rugs, cords).
- **Medical history:** Let us know if you or anyone in your family has a history of blood clot disorders or a malignant hyperthermia reaction to anesthesia.
- **Health:** Call us if you develop a fever, illness, or skin problem near the hip.

Day of Surgery

- If instructed, take blood pressure/heart medications with a small sip of water.
- Arrive at the time given by your surgery coordinator.
- Bring your medication list, insurance card, photo ID, and walker or cane if you have them.
- Wear loose clothing; leave jewelry and valuables at home.
- A responsible adult must drive you home. You may **not** drive yourself.

Immediately After Surgery

- You will recover in the recovery area; many patients go home the same day, and some stay overnight.
- Your surgeon will discuss the procedure with you and your support person.
- Your care team will review wound care, restrictions, medications, follow-up, and warning signs before discharge.

Milestone	What to Expect After Surgery (General Timeline)
Walking	Full weight right away with a walker, moving to a cane as balance allows; most walk without a device or a limp between 2 and 6 weeks.
Hip precautions	Usually none. If precautions are needed for your approach, they will be explained before you go home.
Daily life	Desk work often between 2 and 4 weeks. Swimming once the incision is fully healed (typically 4–6 weeks). No driving while taking narcotic pain medication.
Activity	Return to work, driving, and recreation typically by 6–12 weeks. Walking, cycling, swimming, golf, and doubles tennis are encouraged; While running and impact sports can generally be performed once fully recovered, limitations on duration/intensity may be recommended.
► Please note: This is a general guide only. Detailed post-operative instructions will be provided on the day of surgery, and your restrictions and timeline may change based on the findings and procedures performed.	

Learn More

We **strongly recommend** reading these pages from the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (OrthoInfo) before your surgery:

- **Your condition: Hip Osteoarthritis** — <https://orthoinfo.org/en/diseases--conditions/osteoarthritis-of-the-hip/>
- **Your procedure: Total Hip Replacement** — <https://orthoinfo.org/en/treatment/total-hip-replacement/>

Video: You may find a video demonstrating an example (not the exact technique) of your surgery at <https://patient.orthopedica.com/student/activity/1948534-hip-arthritis> (or browse <https://patient.orthopedica.com/student/catalog>).