

## Post-Op Instructions Total Hip Arthroplasty

### TOTAL HIP ARTHROPLASTY



Once you've been diagnosed with an arthritic hip or a condition that would benefit from total hip arthroplasty, generally the timing is dictated by the patient's pain. The timing of the surgery is dictated by the amount of pain you have and the limitations that it places on your lifestyle. When you feel that the pain and limitations are significant enough to warrant surgical intervention, the time is then appropriate for total hip arthroplasty. Generally, it is scheduled when you can take six to twelve weeks of time for recovery after the surgery. Prior to the operation you will attend a class outlining much of the information regarding your joint replacement. Additionally, you will receive information regarding blood transfusion and blood donation.

**Return to work;** For patients with sedentary employment, many can return to work by four to six weeks. For patients with more vigorous, standing activities during their work day, where accommodations cannot be made over the short term for a more sedentary type of employment, it is six to eight weeks prior to return to full duty.

For patients with a non-cemented femoral component, the amount of weight-bearing can vary, depending on the patient's anatomy and the components used. Generally speaking, between 25-50% of weight-bearing is commonly allowed in the early postoperative period. After six weeks, the patients are then allowed to fully weight bear on the lower extremity. However, as their muscles have weakened it may require an additional six to eight weeks to restore normal gait.

**Driving;** Driving is restricted after total hip arthroplasty. For the first four weeks, the restriction is primarily based upon the positioning required to get into an automobile behind the steering wheel. For patients who are having a left hip arthroplasty performed, they may begin driving again with an automatic transmission at approximately four weeks. For patients with a manual transmission vehicle, it will be approximately six weeks before they can return to driving. This is due to the fact that reflex and response times are reduced and there is a risk the patient may not have adequate control of the vehicle.



**[Orthopedics] Phone Numbers; Hayward 675-3475**

**[Hayward-Fremont GSAA]**

**Fremont 248-3039**

**Activities;** After total hip and total knee arthroplasty, patients are encouraged to walk both as part of their rehabilitation and for general cardiovascular fitness. Cycling, swimming, cross country and light downhill skiing are activities permitted. Activities such as jogging, racquet sports, and basketball should be discouraged. However, occasional activities such as recreational softball or light doubles tennis can be permitted.

Patients can use lower body weight machines with light weights. Other machines such as a Nordic Track, stationary bike, elliptical trainer, stairclimber and treadmill can be used.

After a joint replacement arthroplasty, the patient should be careful with invasive procedures. These include dental procedures, particularly those involving a dental abscess, colonoscopy, cystoscopy, or other major surgeries. The patient should make their dentist or physician aware that they have a joint replacement. **You will need to be on oral or intravenous antibiotics at the time of dental procedure for 2 years and forever with large procedures.**

**Surgery;** Surgery takes on average 1 ½ to 2 hours, the surgeon will come out and speak with family members after the

surgery. Plan on having family members remain in the waiting area if they wish to speak with the surgeon.

**Recovery;** After the operation, you will spend 3-5 days in the hospital.

Depending on your progress with PT and support at home you may need to spend 1-2 weeks in a rehabilitation facility.

Equipment and therapy will be arranged for your home.

**Precaution's;** Patients with a total hip arthroplasty should **avoid bending (flexing) too far forward to avoid the risk of dislocation the hip. Likewise patients should avoid crossing there legs, rotating the hip inward, and should use caution when arising from a seated position.** These precautions are mandatory for the first 6 months after surgery and should be followed for life.

After you leave the hospital be aware of redness or drainage around the incision. Likewise if you experience new calf pain or calf swelling alert the medical office of these problems for direction in treatment.

**Follow up;** You will see your surgeon 2 weeks after the operation to review the status of your surgical incision, and assess for signs of infection. You may need an X-ray at this

visit so plan on being there 30 minutes before the appointment to get your X-rays taken.

There will be several visits within the first year after your joint replacement, usually at 3 months, 6 months and a year after your surgery. After that you will be seen yearly or every other year.

### Additional resources

#### Web sites

Kaiser Permanente  
[kaiserpermanente.org](http://kaiserpermanente.org)

WomenHeart: the National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease  
[womenheart.org](http://womenheart.org)

American Heart Association  
[women.americanheart.org](http://women.americanheart.org)

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI)  
[nhlbi.nih.gov](http://nhlbi.nih.gov)

#### Books

*Kaiser Permanente Menopause Guide Book*

*Kaiser Permanente Healthwise® Handbook*

*The American Heart Association Cookbook—25th Anniversary Edition*

*The 90-Day Fitness Walking Program*  
Mark Fenton, Seth Bauer

*The No-Nag, No-Guilt, No Hassle Guide to Quitting Smoking*  
Tom Ferguson, MD