



# Hip Replacement Surgery

**Hip replacement surgery** is an intensive surgery that replaces the surfaces of your hip joint in order to take away pain and improve your quality of life. The first few months following a hip replacement are crucial in order to maximize your hip joint motion and strength. This is why most surgeons want you to start physical therapy the day after surgery.

## Here's what you can expect in physical therapy and with healing following surgery:

**Hip Precautions:** Precautions are taken after a hip replacement surgery in order to ensure that you do not dislocate your hip while the joint is still healing. These precautions will vary depending on where the surgeon created the incision to perform the surgery. These precautions are typically held for 6-8 weeks after surgery.

- **Do not bend your hip past 90 degrees**
- **Do not turn your foot or knee inward**
- **Do not cross your leg across your body**
- **Do not extend your hip behind you past neutral**

**Swelling:** Swelling in your hip and lower leg is normal and can last up to 6-12 months following surgery. It is recommended that you frequently ice and elevate your leg to help reduce swelling.

**Elevation:** When elevating your leg for swelling control, you need to make sure that your leg is higher than the level of your heart.

**Bruising:** Bruising in your ankle/knee/thigh is common immediately after surgery due to increased swelling and blood to the area.

**Neural symptoms/numbness:** numbness and altered sensation is also common after hip replacement surgery. This is caused by trauma from the surgical process including the cutting of the incision and moving of the nerves and soft tissue that surround the hip joint.

**Step/stair negotiation with cane and walker:** Immediately after surgery, you will want to use a walker to take the pressure off of your hip. After a few days, it is recommended to switch to using a single point cane for walking to avoid reliance on the walker.

- When navigating stairs, you will want to use a handrail and you will go up stairs leading with your non-surgical leg, and you will go down stairs leading with your surgical leg. Your cane should follow your non-surgical leg. (Remember: Up with the good and down with the bad)

## When to call surgeon/red flag signs:

You should call your surgeon or report to your local emergency room if you have the following symptoms:

- **Difficulty breathing**
- **Shortness of breath**
- **Pain, redness, or swelling in the calf**
- **Fever and achiness**
- **Foul-smelling or green/yellow colored discharge from your incision**

**Thank you for choosing and trusting 3DPT for your physical therapy**  
**Dedication. Drive. Difference.**