

Total Hip - Frequently asked questions

My hip is too long! – Most leg length issues are related to the contracture of the hip muscles and how they are pulling on your pelvis after surgery. The muscle spasms from being manipulated, and swelling around the joint all cause tension that pulls on the pelvis making the leg feel long. Please DO NOT LET ANYONE put a lift in your shoe at this time. Use of a lift will actually prevent your pelvis and spine from stretching out after surgery. Please be patient, and work with your physical therapist on a home stretching program to help balance your pelvis and spine back to normal.

Can I drive? – Yes, most patients feel comfortable driving at around 2 weeks. Please no driving while on narcotics.

Can I get in the pool or hot tub? - Yes

Can I get rid of my TED hose? – Yes. Two weeks is the recommended time to wear TED hose. However, the TED hose can help with swelling control and can be worn longer if you wish to minimize welling of the operative leg.

How long do I continue Aspirin? – If you are taking Aspirin to thin your blood, please continue at the twice per day dose for a full 30 days from surgery. At that time, you may go back on your normal Aspirin dose, or discontinue the Aspirin if you were not taking Aspirin before surgery.

Is there anything I should not do? – Please use good common sense. The bone is still growing into the metal implants. There is a very low risk that the implants could loosen with vigorous activity, or the bone could break from a fall. There is also a very low chance that the hip could come out of socket. The hip capsule (the strong tissue that helps keep the hip in socket) is also repairing. Therefore, please avoid extreme motion on the hip. Both the bone

and capsule regenerate at about 12 weeks from surgery. Use your physical therapist as a guide to how much activity you should be doing.

Remember, be patient and use your physical therapist to help guide you through recovery.

At 6 weeks after surgery:

My hip is still.... – stiffness, warmth, swelling, or night pain. These are all completely normal, and part of the healing process. Remember, maximal healing from hip replacement typically takes 1 full year. The concerns you have now should resolve by then.

My hip feels “numb” on the outside – This is a normal sensation as the nerve that gives sensation to the skin along the outside of the hip was disturbed with surgery. This area may also burn as the nerve attempts to regenerate. Nerve regeneration is a very slow process, with maximal improvement coming by 1-2 years.

Do I need a joint replacement card to travel? – No. The TSA does not change the way you are screened with or without a joint replacement card. For more information, please follow the Disabilities and Medical Conditions link at www.tsa.gov.

Do I need antibiotics for routine dental cleanings? – No. The January 2015 American Dental Association clinical practice guideline states, “In general, for patients with prosthetic joint implants, prophylactic antibiotics are not recommended prior to dental procedures to prevent prosthetic joint infection.” For more information, please search www.ada.org.

Are there any restrictions on my hip replacement? – No. Please use good common sense, but there is no specific activity you need to avoid. At this

point, the ingrowth of the bone and metal components as stabilized. Also, the strong layer of tissue called the capsule has healed to help keep your hip in socket. If your hip hurts too much, you are simply doing too much. With normal activities, the plastic used in your hip replacement should last about 30 years. We will check your new hip with periodic x-rays to monitor for wear or mechanical issues.

ENJOY YOUR NEW HIP!!!!

Refer to the Hip Replacement Book given to you by Dr. Petrow for additional information. You can also visit Dr. Petrow's homepage at www.TucsonRoboticJointReplacement.com for additional information.