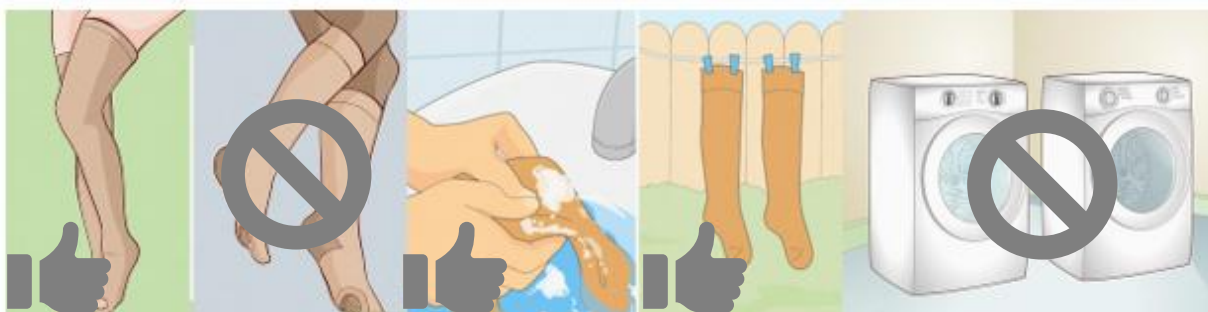


# Discharge Instructions for Hip Replacement Surgery

You just had hip replacement surgery. This means your natural hip was replaced with an artificial joint (prosthesis). You must take care of your new hip. Be sure to see your healthcare provider for follow-up visits and return to activity slowly. A total hip replacement is major surgery. So, it will be a few months before you can move comfortably.

## Home Care

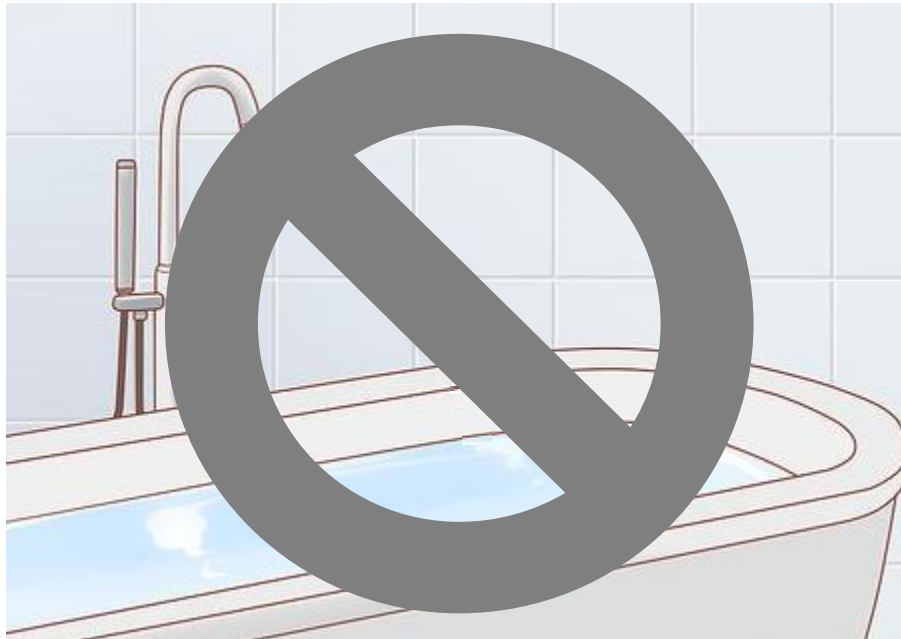
- Take your pain medicine exactly as directed, with someone helping you follow label instructions.
- Don't drive until your healthcare provider says it's OK, and never drive while taking opioid pain medicine.
- You may be given compression stockings. If so, wear them as instructed by your surgeon. You may need these for 4 to 6 weeks after surgery.



- If you have staples, sutures or a Prineo (long white dressing) as your closure. The dressing will remain for 2 weeks after surgery. If the bandage becomes saturated or peels, please call our office for assistance.

## Incision Care

- Prevent infection by washing your hands often. If an infection occurs, it will need to be treated right away. Call your healthcare provider immediately if you think you may have an infection. Symptoms include fever, chills, redness, warmth, or an incision that leaks white, green, or yellow fluid. You may be asked to come to the office or send a photo.
- Don't soak your incision in water until your provider says it's OK. This means no hot tubs, bathtubs, or swimming pools.



- Follow your surgeon's instructions on when it's OK to shower. Don't rub the incision or apply creams or lotions to it. To prevent falling when showering sit on a shower stool and have someone nearby help you.
- Do not let pets lick any wounds, or rub against any surgical wounds until at least one month after surgery.

## Sitting and Moving Safely

- Use chairs with arms and sit with your knees slightly lower than your hips. Don't sit on low or sagging chairs or couches.
- Don't lean forward or backward while sitting.



- To relieve discomfort, you may find getting up and walking a bit may help.

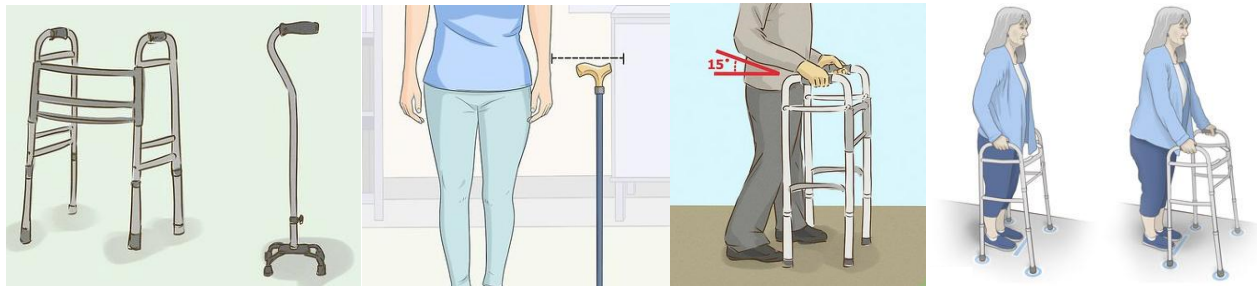


- Walk often and do your prescribed exercises as instructed.
- Don't cross your legs.
- Keep your feet flat on the floor. Don't turn your foot or leg inward. This stresses your hip joint.

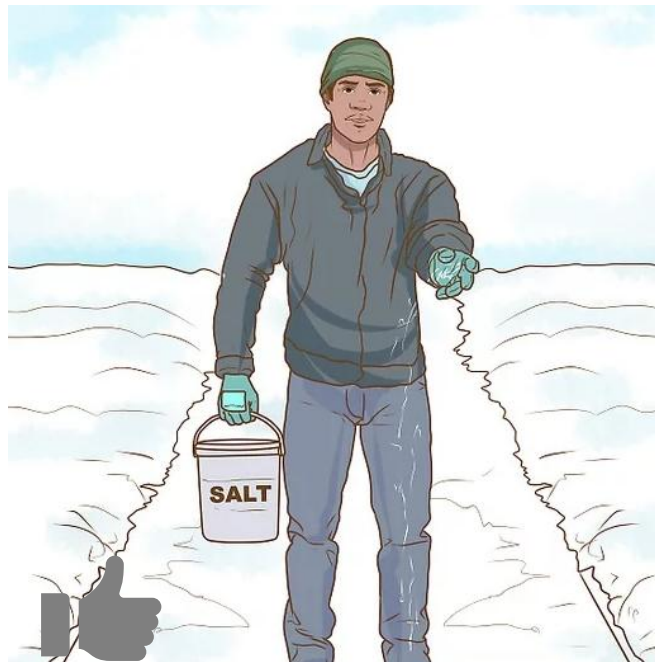
- Don't bend at the hip to pick things up. Don't bend at the waist to put on socks and shoes. Have a sock aid and long-handled shoe horn to help. Have a reaching device that allows you to grab objects without bending at the hip.



- Use a cane, crutches, walker, or handrails until your balance, flexibility, and strength improve. Remember to ask for help from others when you need it.

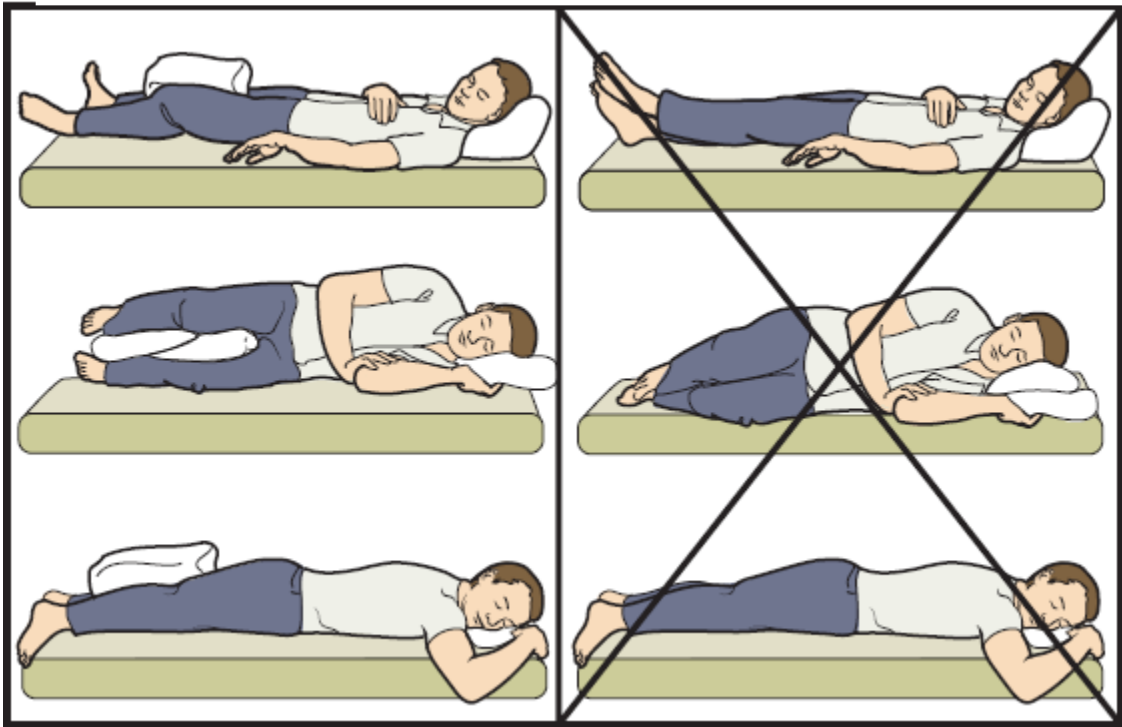


- Free up your hands so that you can use them to keep balance. Use a fanny pack, apron, or pockets to carry things.
- As your strength and endurance improve, you can walk for 20 to 30 minutes, 2 to 3 times a day.
- Once you have fully recovered, regular walks of 20 to 30 minutes, 3 to 4 times a week, will help maintain your strength.
- Sit on a firm cushion when you ride in a car and don't sit too low. Try not to bend your hip much when getting in and out of the car.

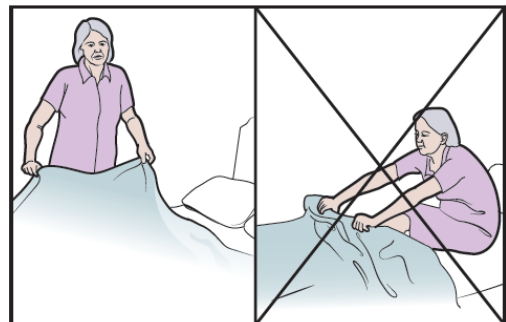


- If you are in a snowy or icy environment, make sure sidewalks and steps are cleared of snow and ice as much as possible, and salted heavily to help provide better traction. This should be maintained by a helper while recovering from surgery.
- Arrange your household to keep the items you need within reach.
- Motion detector night lights will help you avoid falling or tripping in the dark.
- Remove electrical cords, throw rugs, and anything else that may cause you to fall.
- Follow your healthcare provider's orders about how much weight to put on the affected leg.

## Sleeping



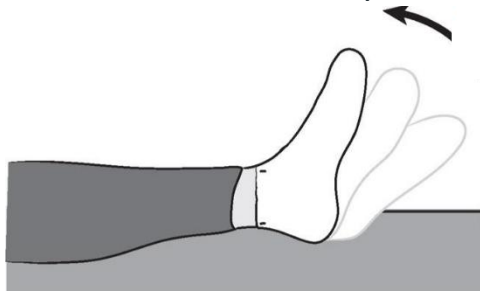
- Don't cross your legs.
- Before you sleep on your side or stomach, call the clinical staff to make sure those positions are appropriate for your post-operative hip. Not all procedures are the same and appropriate positions may vary. Use pillows between your legs when sleeping on your back.
- Don't lean forward while sitting in bed or getting out of bed.



## Early Post-Operative Exercises

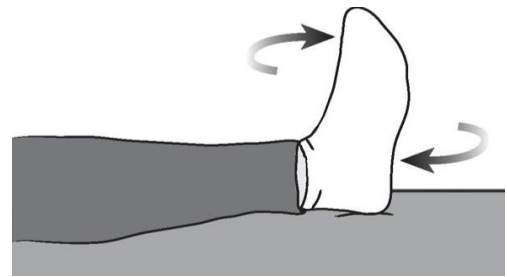
The following exercises will help increase circulation to your legs and feet, which is important for preventing blood clots. They will also help strengthen your muscles and improve hip movement.

Start the exercises as soon as you are able. You can begin them in the recovery room shortly after surgery. You may feel uncomfortable at first, but these exercises will enhance your recovery and help with post-operative pain.



### Ankle Pumps:

Slowly push your foot up and down. Repeat this exercise several times, as often as every 5 to 10 minutes. If you are watching television, you should pump your feet every time a commercial comes on.



### Ankle Rotations:

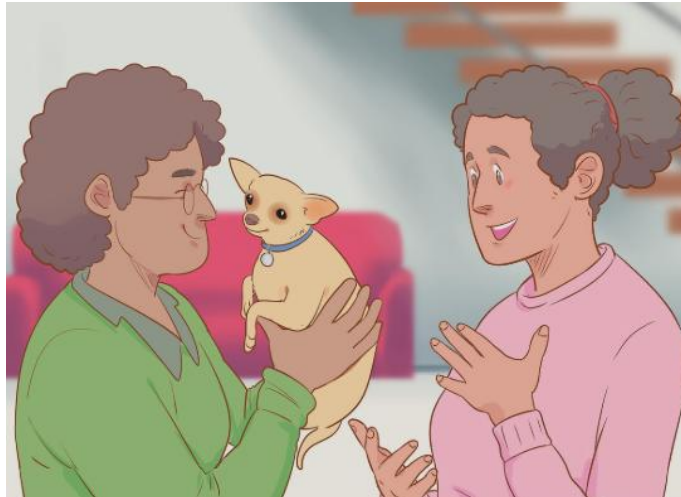
Move your ankle inward toward your other foot and then outward away from your other foot. Repeat 5 times in each direction. This exercise should take 3 minutes. Do 3 to 4 sessions a day.



### Standing Knee Raises:

Lift your operated leg toward your chest. Do not lift your knee higher than your waist. Hold for 2 or 3 counts. Put your leg down, repeat 10 times. This exercise should take 3 minutes. Do 3 to 4 sessions a day.

## Here is why pet hair and close contact with pets are concerning after joint replacement



- **Bacteria Carriage:** Pet hair and dander can collect and transport bacteria from the pet's skin or mouth (such as *Pasteurella multocida*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, or *Streptococcus canis*) to the surgical incision.
- **Foreign Body Reaction:** If a pet hair falls into the incision before it has fully healed, it can act as a foreign body, increasing the risk of infection.
- **Biofilm Formation:** Bacteria from pets can adhere to the artificial implant and form a biofilm, which is difficult for the body's immune system to fight because the metal/plastic implant has no blood supply to carry white blood cells.
- **Physical Hazards:** Pets can cause accidental damage to the healing, fragile skin by scratching, biting, or stepping directly on the incision.
- **Contamination Risk:** Direct contact with pets (e.g., licking, sleeping in the same bed) brings the animal's microbiome into direct contact with the wound, which can lead to rare but severe infections.
- **Keep Pets Away from The Incision:** Do not allow pets to sleep in the bed until you have no open wounds or scabbing. The incision must be completely healed before regular contact can resume.
- **Maintain Wound Hygiene:** Keep the incision covered with a clean dressing, especially when pets are around.

## When to call your healthcare provider



**Call Orthopedic and SportsMedicine Clinic of Fairbanks at (907) 479-2663 or get medical care right away if you have any of the following:**

- Worsening hip or knee pain
- Pain, redness, or swelling in your calf or leg not related to your incision
- Tenderness or redness in your calf
- Fever of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher, or as directed by your healthcare provider
- Shaking and chills
- Worsening swelling or redness at the incision site.
- Fluid draining from the incision after 4 days

**Call 911 right away if you have any of the following:**

- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Fainting episode or unconsciousness