

Physiotherapy after your hip arthroscopy

This leaflet gives you advice about recovering from your hip arthroscopy. It explains exercises you should do each day, things to look out for and some general advice.

If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or the physiotherapist caring for you.

What is a hip arthroscopy?

Hip arthroscopy is a minimally invasive surgical technique that allows doctors to view the inside of the hip joint. This is performed with a fibre optic telescope which then allows the doctor to perform a variety of surgical procedures. For example:

- repair or trimming of cartilage
- removing loose bodies such as cartilage or bone fragments from the joint
- removal of the synovium (the membrane lining the hip joint).

Hip arthroscopy is most commonly performed for:

- labral tears - when the cartilage is torn, or coming away from the hip socket
- removal of loose bodies such as cartilage or bone fragments from the joint
- to treat Femoral Acetabular Impingement (FAI) - where there is too much friction in the hip joint.

How do I recover from my hip arthroscopy surgery?

Physiotherapy plays a very important role in your hip arthroscopy rehabilitation and there are specific exercises you need to do after surgery to restore your strength, control and mobility. Your physiotherapist will discuss these with you and make sure you can do them safely and effectively.

Your physiotherapist will provide you with elbow crutches and teach you how to walk with them. Some people are instructed to partially weight bear, which means only walking with 50% of your weight on your operated side, and others can fully weight bear straight away. Please be guided by your physiotherapist.

Hip arthroscopy exercise programme

Below are some exercises to help you recover after your surgery. Do these exercises at least **3-5 times** a day for the first **two weeks** after your operation. Repeat all exercises **10 times**.

1. Ankle pumps - Lying on your back or sitting down. Bend and straighten your ankles briskly (Pic 1a and 1b).



2. Static Quadriceps contraction - Lying on your back with legs straight point your toes up to the ceiling and push your knees down firmly against the bed. Hold for 2-3 seconds, then relax (Pic 2).

Pic 2



3. Static Gluteal contraction - Lying on your back or sitting in a chair. Squeeze your buttocks firmly together and hold for 2-3 seconds, then relax.

4. Supported knee bends - Lying on your back. Bend and straighten your operated leg as far as comfortable (Pic 3).

Pic 3



5. Lying hip abduction - Lying on your back with your leg straight. Slide your leg out to the side as far as you can and then back to midline. You may need some assistance with this exercise initially (Pic 4a and 4b).

Pic 4a



Pic 4b



6. Standing hip abduction – Stand holding onto a fixed surface such as a kitchen work top. Keep your body straight with your hip, knee and foot facing forward. Keep your knee straight while you slowly lift your leg out to the side, then return to the start position. (Pic 5)

Pic 5



7. Standing knee raises – Stand holding onto a fixed surface such as a kitchen work top. Lift your operated leg toward your waist but ensure it does not come higher. Hold for 2-3 seconds and put your leg down (Pic 6).

Pic 6



8. Standing hip extension - Stand holding onto a fixed surface such as a kitchen work top. Keep your operated leg straight, take it backwards and then bring back to the start position. Do not lean forwards. Hold for 2-3 seconds (Pic 7).

Pic 7



Ongoing physiotherapy

After you are discharged home, you may be referred for ongoing physiotherapy either at Guys and St Thomas' Hospital or at your local hospital. Physiotherapy will help you to regain hip movement, improve hip and core strength and prevent stiffness. Muscles take many weeks to recover from the surgery and from the long-term effect of the hip pathology itself prior to surgery. Please be guided by your physiotherapist.

Will I be in pain?

You should expect a moderate amount of pain following your operation. You will be prescribed painkillers and it is important that you take these regularly as prescribed by the doctor looking after you, so that you can complete your exercises.

When can I leave hospital?

You will be able to leave hospital when you can walk safely on your own with elbow crutches and can complete the exercise programme on this leaflet. If you have stairs at home please let your physiotherapist know so that they can teach you how to negotiate them safely.

When can I resume my normal activities?

Work

It is advisable to take at least two weeks off work after your operation, but this varies between individuals and depends on your type of job. The first week after surgery should be dedicated to your recovery so you should not work at all during this time. It is realistic to start desk-based work at home in the second week, with a graded return thereafter provided your journey to work is manageable.

Return to full work is usually possible at four to six weeks, depending on how physically active your job requires you to be. Be aware that it will initially be tiring when you start back at work and your rehabilitation will be ongoing, so setting time aside for exercise and your physiotherapy appointments may still be required.

Sports

From two weeks onwards (once the pain has improved sufficiently) you can start using a static bike with the seat set higher than normal, and exercise in a pool. By six to eight weeks, the hip should function almost normally in day-to-day life. You should be able to resume your usual gym activities, albeit at lower intensity.

After two or three months you can progress from using a static bike, to an elliptical (cross) trainer and finally a treadmill. Squats and deep lunges are not advised for at least three months after surgery as these activities cause unnecessary irritation to the surgical area.

Over the next three to six months further improvements are expected and a full recovery is determined by achieving your exercise goals. As a general guide, running and team sports are possible after four to six months. Please be advised by your consultant and your physiotherapist at your follow up appointments.

Driving

If you are fully weight bearing, confident walking without crutches, can get into a car unaided and do an emergency stop, then driving is possible after one week. Always check with your insurance company before driving after your surgery as they may notify you their recommendations for driving.

What should I do if I have a problem?

If you experience any of the following please see your GP:

- sudden increase in swelling around the wound or the limb area
- the dressing has become loose or wet which requires changing
- the wound starts to smell or the wound starts to ooze
- the wound is more tender and you are experiencing more pain
- the wound starts to bleed
- you have a temperature or start to feel unwell

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns regarding physiotherapy, please contact the orthopaedic physiotherapy team on 020 7188 5432 (Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 6.30pm).

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

t: 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Your comments and concerns

For advice, support or to raise a concern, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). To make a complaint, contact the complaints department.

t: 020 7188 8801 (PALS) e: pals@gstt.nhs.uk

t: 020 7188 3514 (complaints) e: complaints2@gstt.nhs.uk

Language Support Services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch:

t: 020 7188 8815 e: languagesupport@gstt.nhs.uk

NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

t: 111

NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

w: www.nhs.uk

Get involved and have your say: become a member of the Trust

Members of Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust contribute to the organisation on a voluntary basis. We count on them for feedback, local knowledge and support. Membership is free and it is up to you how much you get involved. To find out more, and to become a member:

t: 0800 731 0319 e: members@gstt.nhs.uk w: www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/membership

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