

Physiotherapy department

Physiotherapy following surgical hip dislocation

This leaflet gives you advice on your recovery following hip dislocation surgery and exercises you should do each day. It also gives you an idea of things to look out for and general advice about activities such as driving and returning to sport.

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

What is surgical hip dislocation?

Surgical hip dislocation is a procedure that allows unrestricted access to the entire hip joint. Patients who have bony abnormalities in their hip, such as overhanging bone spurs/projections, an excessively large femoral head (the socket part of the hip joint), or other sources of abnormal bone contact, may benefit from surgical hip dislocation in order to address these abnormalities.

During surgery a cut is made through the greater trochanter (top of thigh bone) to enable the surgeon to have better access to the hip joint. At the end of the surgery the greater trochanter is reattached and held in place by three screws.

What precautions should I take after the procedure?

To make sure your hip heals correctly, you will need to follow trochanteric precautions for six weeks after your surgery.

This means you must **not**:

- **actively move your operated leg out to the side**
- **cross your legs.**

For example:

When getting into bed you must get in the side of your 'good' leg. When you get out of bed you must also get out the side of your 'good' leg. This will ensure that you avoid actively moving your operated leg out to the side.

You must also be **partial weight bearing** for six weeks. This means you can only put 50% of your weight through your operated leg when you walk and **use crutches at all times**.

Your physiotherapist will provide you with elbow crutches and teach you how to walk with them partial weight bearing.

Your exercise programme

You must do these exercises for the **first two weeks** after your operation.

These exercises need to be completed at least three times a day.

1. Lying on your back or sitting down, bend and straighten your ankles briskly. **Repeat 20 times.**



Bend



Straighten

This exercise also helps to prevent blood clots, which can happen after surgery due to inactivity.

2. Lying on your back with your legs straight, pull your toes up to the ceiling and push your knees down firmly against the bed. Hold for five seconds then relax. **Repeat 10 times.**



3. Lying on your back or sitting in a chair, squeeze your buttocks firmly together and hold for five seconds then relax. **Repeat 10 times.**
4. Lying on your back, bend your operated leg and place a pillow or rolled up towel under you knee.



- a) Now push the back of your knee into the pillow or towel and pull your toes up at the same time.

- b) Your knee should straighten and your heel raise off the bed. Hold for five seconds then relax. **Repeat 10 times.**



5. Lying on your back, bend and straighten your operated leg as far as comfortable. **Repeat 10 times.**



6. Stand holding onto a chair or kitchen work surface.



- a) Keep your operated leg straight, take it backwards.
- b) Hold for five seconds and then bring back to the start position.
- c) Do not lean forwards. **Repeat 10 times.**

7. Stand holding onto a chair or kitchen work surface. Bend the knee of your operated leg up and forwards, lifting your foot off the floor. Hold this position for approximately five seconds then relax. Aim to get your knee level with your hip. **Repeat 10 times.**



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 you take these regularly as directed by the nurse 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 do them safely.

Ongoing physiotherapy

When you are discharged home you will be referred for ongoing outpatient physiotherapy, either at Guy's and St Thomas' Hospitals or at your local hospital.

Physiotherapy is absolutely vital following your surgical hip dislocation.

Weekly physiotherapy sessions should be started as soon as possible after leaving the hospital to help you regain hip movement and prevent stiffness. Crutches must be used to protect the screws holding the trochanteric bone in place for the first six weeks.

Please note: Hydrotherapy is very useful during this period.

After your six week outpatient appointment with your surgeon, you will be able to fully weight bear without crutches and can start to increase your exercise repetitions and expand your choice of exercise, for example using a static exercise bike.

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. Muscles take many weeks to recover not only from the surgery but from the long-term effect of the hip injury itself prior to surgery. **Please seek guidance from your physiotherapist.**

When can I return to normal activities?

Work

It is advisable to take at least six weeks off work, but this varies between individuals and depends on your type of job. The first two weeks 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 after three weeks, with a potential return to the office for the odd half-day after four weeks, provided your journey to work is manageable.

Return to full work is usually possible at eight weeks after your surgery, again depending on how physically active your job requires you to be. Be aware it will initially be tiring being back at work and your rehabilitation will be ongoing, so setting time aside for exercise and your physiotherapy appointments is still required.

Sports

By three months, 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. Further improvements are expected over the next three to six months and a full recovery is really determined by

your sporting 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

Once you are able to start **fully weight bearing**, are confident walking without crutches and can get in to a car unaided then returning to driving is reasonable after a minimum of six weeks. Always check with your insurance company before driving after your surgery as they may refuse to meet a claim if they feel you have driven too soon.

What should I do if I have a problem?

If you experience any of the following see your GP:

- Swelling has developed around the wound or the limb area.
- The dressing has become loose or become wet and requires changing
- The wound starts to smell and fluid is coming from the wound
- 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 about your physiotherapy, please contact the **orthopaedic physiotherapy team** on **020 7188 5432** (Monday to Friday, 8.30am-4.30pm).

Pharmacy medicines helpline

For information about any medicines that you have been prescribed at Guy's and St Thomas' Hospitals, you can speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

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

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) – To make comments or raise concerns about the Trust's services, please contact PALS. Ask a member of staff to direct you to the PALS office or: t: 020 7188 8801 at St Thomas' t: 020 7188 8803 at Guy's e: pals@gstt.nhs.uk

Knowledge & Information Centre (KIC) – For more information about health conditions, support groups and local services, or to search the internet and send emails, please visit the KIC on the Ground Floor, North Wing, St Thomas' Hospital.

t: 020 7188 3416

Language support services – If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch using the following contact details.

t: 020 7188 8815 fax: 020 7188 5953

NHS Direct – Offers health information and advice from specially trained nurses over the phone 24 hours a day.

t: 0845 4647 w: www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

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