

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) POST TOTAL HIP ARTHROPLASTY**

### **1) How long and how often will I have to come to physiotherapy?**

- The amount of physiotherapy required after your surgery can vary from person to person. Recovery is dependent on many factors (for example: previous mobility, strength, pain, swelling, etc.).
- On average, patients require 3-4 physiotherapy appointments spaced out over 12-16 weeks.
- Your physiotherapist will provide you with a home exercise program. Completing these exercises is a crucial part of your recovery.

### **2) When can I drive?**

- You must get clearance from your surgeon before you resume driving. Generally, you are not permitted to drive for 4-6 weeks after your surgery.

### **3) Can I use heat?**

- Initially after surgery, we do not recommend placing heat on your surgical leg. Please talk to your physiotherapist before you use heat on your surgical leg.

### **4) When can use ice? For how long and how frequently can I use ice?**

- You can use ice on your surgical leg as soon as your bulky dressing is removed. Do not use ice directly on skin. Always ensure when icing that your incision or dressing remains clean and dry. To achieve this, place a thin cloth or towel on your incision, as well as a waterproof barrier (for example: a thin plastic bag) for protection.
- Leave the ice on for approximately 10-12 minutes (watch for redness around the area), as often as needed for symptom management. It is generally recommended to use ice following your exercises (for example: 3 times per day).
- Do not use ice over an area of decreased sensation or numbness.

### **5) How long do I need to use my walker?**

- Talk to your physiotherapist. The walker may be required for a few weeks to months, depending on the individual.

### **6) What is the best position to sleep in? Can I sleep on my side?**

- Sleep on your back with your legs straight.
- Do not use a pillow under your legs.
- Sleeping on the non-surgical side is a great option, as long as 1-2 pillows are placed between your legs to ensure your hip precautions are maintained.
- Sleeping on the surgical side is usually only tolerated once your staples are removed and the incision is healed.

### **7) Can I sleep in a recliner chair?**

- It is not recommended to sleep in a recliner chair. Getting in and out of the chair, as well as lying in the reclined position, often will flex the hip greater than 90 degrees. This amount of bending at the hip is not allowed as per your hip precautions.

### **8) What activities can I do after my surgery?**

- Walking is a low-impact activity which can be performed immediately after surgery. Use your walker or cane as directed by your physiotherapist.
- Swimming is allowed when your incision is healed. Your incision is fully healed around 6 weeks post surgery. Please check with your surgeon before starting to swim. Whip kicks are not permitted.
- High impact activities are NOT recommended (example: jogging, running, squash/racquetball and singles tennis).
- If you are unsure if an activity is permitted, check with your surgeon.

### 9) Can I do laundry?

- It is recommended to do smaller, more frequent laundry loads. Carry a backpack when possible, or use a bundle buggy. Please keep in mind you cannot bend greater than 90 degrees at your operated hip until cleared by your surgeon (usually about 12 weeks post-op). To reach into a washer/dryer below knee height you may need to use your reacher or have your operated leg kicked out behind you to ensure your hip precautions are maintained (see picture below).



**Patient Handouts** can be obtained by clicking on this link:

<https://www.lakeridgehealth.on.ca/en/ourservices/musculoskeletalphysiotherapy.asp>

- Total Hip Replacement Surgery booklet
- Equipment list
- Vendor List for Durham and Surrounding Area
- A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Post Total Hip Arthroplasty
- Link to a pre-operative education video presentation

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