

# Anterior Total Hip Replacement

## Home Care Instructions

Full recovery from your total hip replacement surgery is going to take months. This information will help you understand your recovery and care at home. Precautions and exercises to protect and strengthen your new hip are included to help you be active in your care and recovery.

### Using ice

Use ice to help reduce pain and swelling. It is best to use ice after exercise or if you have been very active. Use ice cubes, gel ice packs, or a device that pumps cold water through a sleeve that wraps around your joint, called Game Ready or Ice Man.

- Be sure to use a layer of fabric between your skin and the the ice pack, gel ice pack, or Game Ready sleeve to protect your skin. Gel ice packs are much cooler than ice or the Game Ready, and they can quickly hurt your skin if applied directly on your skin.
- The Game Ready can be used around the clock for the first 3 days after surgery. Use it after that as needed as you recover. The temperature can be adjusted so keep it as cold as you are able to tolerate for the best results.
- If you are using ice packs or gel ice packs instead of the Game Ready, use the packs for 20 to 30 minutes every hour.
- Check your skin often for signs of redness or swelling.
- Wear compression shorts or a hip spica wrap to help control your swelling if directed by your doctor.

- Tell your doctor or physical therapist if you have:
  - ➔ Increased pain
  - ➔ Numbness or tingling
  - ➔ Tiredness that does not go away

### Hip precautions

- Follow these precautions for 2 to 3 months or as directed by your doctor or therapist.
- Your new hip has limited range of motion right after surgery. These precautions protect your new hip from sliding out of position or dislocating while the muscles heal.

Follow these hip precautions to protect your new hip joint and allow for healing:

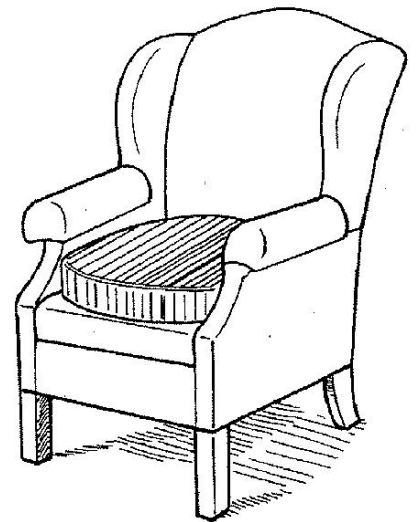
- **Do not** turn your leg or foot on your new hip side out to the side of your body, called external rotation.
- **Do not** extend your new hip joint beyond a neutral position. This means you should not bend your new hip back more than you do in normal walking.

- **Do not** cross your new hip leg high over your other leg when sitting to put on shoes or socks. This is to prevent external rotation of the new hip. You can cross your legs at the ankles, just not high over the other leg.

**No!**



You may find it helpful to use an elevated toilet seat and to add a pillow or cushion to raise the seat height on a chair. You may find it hard to get up from a low couch or chair, although it is not a problem for your new hip position to sit on a lower chair.



## Exercises

Your therapist will teach you some exercises you need to do before you leave the hospital. Other exercises should be started weeks after your surgery. Follow these guidelines unless you were given different directions from your doctor or therapist.

### For all exercises

- Follow the direction of your doctor or therapist for these exercises.
- You may need help with these exercises at first. Have a family member come to the hospital to work with you and your therapist to learn how to help you when you go home.
- Exercise 3 times each day. Do 10 to 15 repetitions of each exercise.
- Do all exercises slowly with smooth motion.

### Exercises started right away

#### Ankle pumps

This exercise can be done while lying in bed or sitting in a chair.

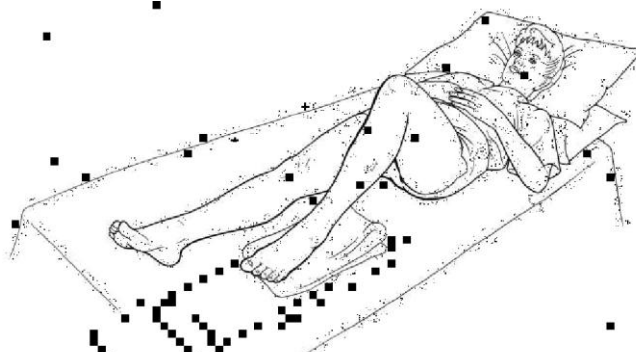
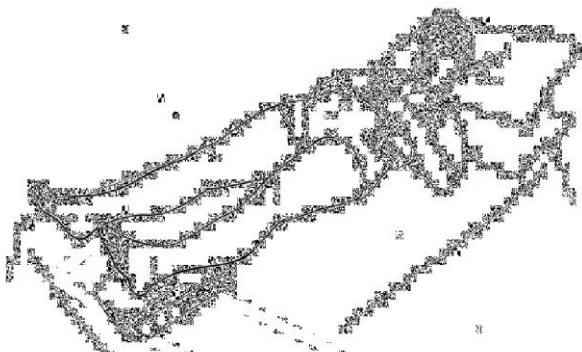
1. Move your foot up and down as if pushing down or letting up on a gas pedal in a car.
2. Repeat 10 to 15 times.
3. Do this exercise with the other foot.



#### Hip flexion

Use a plastic trash bag or a piece of cardboard under your leg to reduce friction. A small towel under your heel may also help.

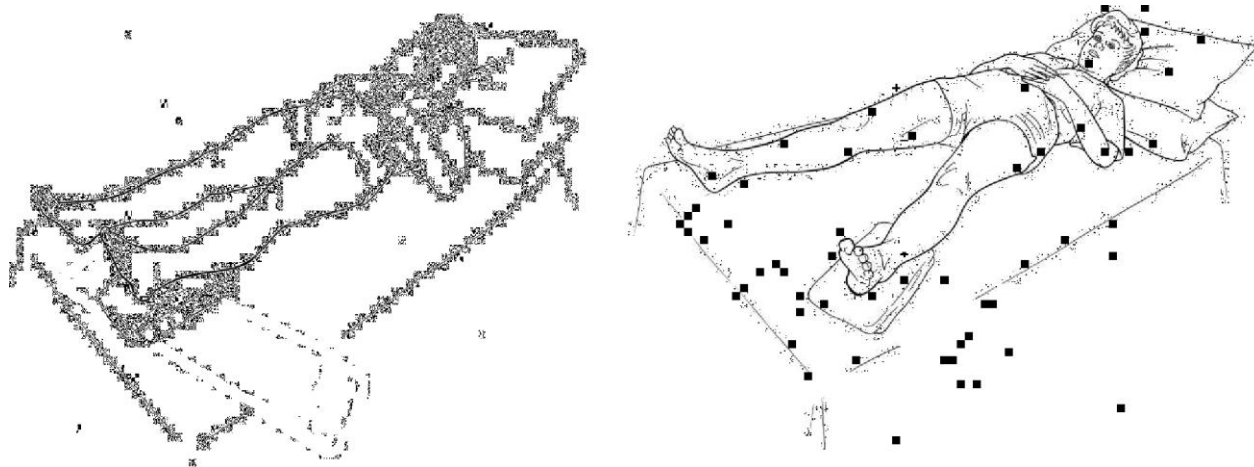
1. Lie on your back and slide your heel toward your buttocks, bending your knee up. Do not lift your heel off of the surface. Keep your knee pointed towards the ceiling, so you do not turn your leg in or out.
2. Pause and then slide your heel forward and straighten your knee.



## Hip abduction

Use a plastic trash bag or a piece of cardboard under your leg to reduce friction. A small towel under your heel may also help.

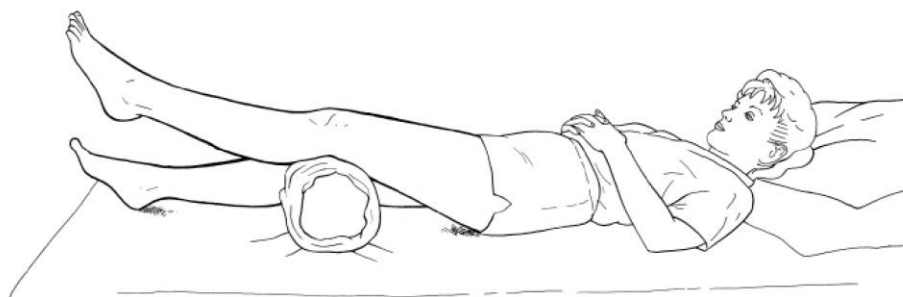
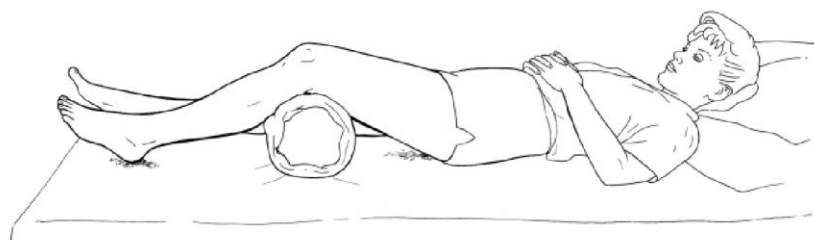
1. Lie on your back with your legs straight. Have your toes pointed to the ceiling.
2. Slide your surgery leg out to the side, like opening a pair of scissors.
3. Pause and then slide your leg back to the starting position. Do not cross the midline of your body.



## Short arc quads (Blanket roll or coffee can exercise)

1. Place a blanket roll or 3 pound coffee can under the knee of your surgery leg.
2. Resting your thigh on the roll or can, lift your heel off the bed and straighten your knee as much as you can.
3. Pause and then lower your heel down to the starting position.

This exercise can also be done on your other leg.

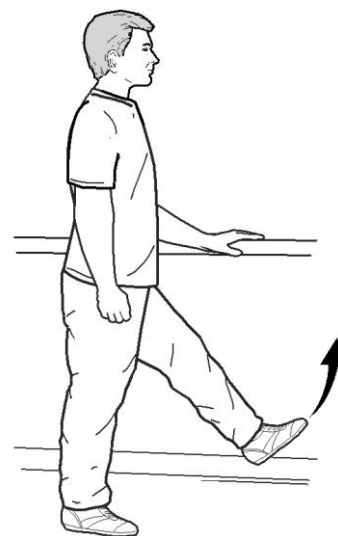


Start these exercises **1 week after surgery** or as directed by your doctor or therapist.\

### Leg forward

Use a counter, steady table or chair for support for this exercise. Stand up straight and be sure the motion is from your hip.

1. Tighten the muscles in the front of your upper leg or thigh.
2. Keeping the muscles tight and your knee straight, lift your leg forward.
3. Hold and then lower your leg to the starting position.
4. Relax and repeat.



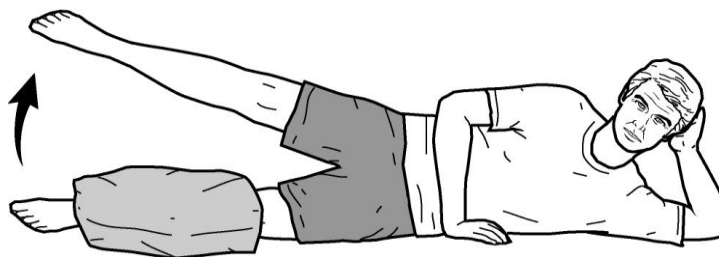
### Straight leg raise - lying

1. Lie on your back with your surgery leg straight. Your other leg should be bent at the knee with the foot flat on the floor.
2. Slowly raise your leg off of the bed about 12 to 24 inches, keeping the knee straight.
3. Hold and then lower your leg slowly to the starting position.
4. Relax and repeat.



### Side leg lift

1. Lie on your side with your surgery leg on top.\* Place a pillow between your legs. Bend your lower leg for support if needed.
2. Keep your top leg straight and lift it about 12 inches, keeping the hip very slightly forward.
3. Hold and then lower the leg to the starting position.
4. Relax and repeat.



\* If the side lying position is too difficult, you can do this exercise while standing. No pillow would be needed.

**Talk to your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.**

For more health information, contact the Library for Health Information at **614-293-3707** or e-mail **health-info@osu.edu**.