

POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR HIP REPLACEMENT

Day Before Surgery

- Remove nail polish.
- Shower and wash your hair the night before. Bathing reduces skin bacteria and lowers infection risk.
- Wear clean pajamas and sleep in freshly washed sheets.
- Get a good night's rest.
- DO NOT eat or drink anything after MIDNIGHT the night before surgery, including ice chips, gum, or mints.
- DO NOT apply lotions or powders.
- DO NOT shave before surgery.

Day of Surgery

- Only take prescribed medications with a small sip of water.
- Do not wear makeup or jewelry.
- Do not take insulin or oral diabetic medications unless instructed.
- You'll be asked to empty your bladder. Glasses, contacts, hearing aids, or dentures will be removed.
- Vital signs will be taken.
- Your surgical site will be prepared. The surgeon will review the procedure.
- An IV will be started to provide fluids and medications.

Anesthesia

- The anesthesiologist or nurse anesthetist will discuss your anesthesia options. General anesthesia puts you to sleep. Local anesthesia numbs part of your body and may include spinal or nerve injections. You may stay awake without pain. Let your anesthesiologist know your preference. Local is often preferred for faster, safer recovery.
- Surgery typically takes 2-3 hours. Family may wait in a designated room.

Recovery & Post-Anesthesia Unit

- Vital signs will be monitored.
- Nurses will assess anesthesia recovery and start pain medication.
- You may receive oxygen and warming blankets.
- A cold compress will be placed at the surgical site.
- A urinary catheter and x-ray of the prosthesis may be done.

Hospital Stay

- You will be moved to a specialized nursing unit. Rest is crucial-limit visits.
- Nurses will monitor vitals, incision, IV fluids, antibiotics, catheter, oxygen levels, and begin anticoagulants.
- DO NOT get up without assistance within the first 24 hours.

Post-Surgical Precautions

- DO NOT bend the operated hip beyond 90°.
- DO NOT twist or rotate the leg.
- DO NOT cross the operated leg for 4-6 weeks.
- Keep a pillow between your legs while in bed.
- DO NOT lift the knee above the hip or lean forward while sitting.
- DO NOT pick objects off the floor while seated or rotate feet excessively.

Discharge Criteria

- You will be discharged when:
 - Medical condition is stable
 - Able to eat and urinate
 - Pain is controlled with oral medications
 - Home is safe and prepared

At Home

- Gradual improvement expected over months: reduced pain, stiffness, and more independence.
- Work return depends on recovery speed and job type.
- Contact Dr. Hernández if:
 - Increasing pain, redness, warmth, swelling, or drainage
 - Calf pain, swelling, heat, or redness
 - Fever over 38°C lasting more than 24 hours

First 48 Hours at Home

- Expect adjustment period and anxiety-focus on recovery.
- Gradually increase physical activity. Goal: regain strength and function.
- Use a walker or cane until strength and confidence return.
- Most patients walk with a cane after 3-4 weeks and may use it up to 3 months.

Sexual Activity After Joint Replacement

- Hip: Safe to resume sexual activity about 6 weeks post-surgery, if no major pain.
- Lying on your back is safest initially. Increase activity as healing progresses.

Diet

- Resume as tolerated with vegetables, fruits, and protein (meat, fish, chicken, nuts, eggs).
- Drink at least 8 glasses of water daily.
- Appetite may decrease post-surgery due to medication and anesthesia.
- Proper nutrition promotes healing: calories, proteins, vitamins A & C, and zinc.
- Follow any prescribed diet. Poor nutrition can delay healing.

Possible Complications

- Blood Clots: Can cause serious health issues if they travel to lungs.
 - Move often and exercise
 - Take anticoagulants as prescribed
 - Use compression stockings
- Avoid foods high in vitamin K (e.g., broccoli, spinach) when on anticoagulants.
- Blood clot symptoms:
 - Calf pain/redness not related to incision.
 - Swelling in thigh, calf, ankle, or foot.
 - Chest pain, shortness of breath, or pain while breathing

Surgical Site Infection

- Watch for:
 - Increased redness or pain at incision
 - Drainage or pus
 - Fever over 38°C
- Contact Dr. Hernández if any symptoms occur.

Infection Prevention

- Artificial joints lack natural protection. Antibiotics may be needed before certain procedures:
 - Dental procedures
 - Colonoscopy, sigmoidoscopy
 - Cystoscopy, prostate/bladder surgery
 - Kidney surgery, cardiac catheterization, endoscopy, enemas
- Notify doctors or dentists about your joint replacement.