

# Sex After Total Hip Replacement



## Let's talk about sex.

Sexual activity is often an overlooked, yet important contributor to patients' quality of life. Research suggests that although patients want to know about returning to sexual activity after their total hip replacement, this conversation is difficult to have with their surgeons due to the topics' sensitive nature.

We hope this educational pamphlet gives you enough information to get started, and get you back to your normal self.

## More Questions?



This pamphlet is meant to answer most patients' concerns about return to sexual activity after a total hip replacement. If you have any further concerns or questions, please talk to your surgeon.

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## SEX AFTER HIP REPLACEMENT

A guide to returning to sexual activity following your total hip replacement.



## When is it safe to resume sexual activity?

When resuming sexual activity after your hip replacement, it is best to start off taking a more passive role to determine what is comfortable for you.

Positions that require less hip motion (e.g. lying down) can be resumed earlier than positions that require more hip motion. On average, patients resume sexual activity between 1-3 months following their surgery.

If you had a revision total hip replacement, it is recommended that you wait longer before resuming sexual activity.



## Associated Risks

The main risks involved with returning to sexual activity following your hip replacement are hip dislocation and hip discomfort.

Although dislocation of a prosthetic hip is relatively uncommon, it can occur. The greatest risk for dislocation is within the first 3 months following your surgery.

## Which positions are safe?

Certain positions should be avoided initially to minimize the risk of hip dislocation. As a general guideline, any position that requires the following hip motions should be avoided:

- rotating your hip inwards
- deep bend at the hip
- crossing the legs or ankles

A recent motion-capture study determined which positions were safe and which were risky for patients after hip replacement (see Table 1).

Table 1.

| Position | Females | Males |
|----------|---------|-------|
|          | ✓       | ✓     |
|          | ✓       | ✓     |
|          | ✗       | ✓     |

Table 1. (cont'd)

| Positions | Females | Males |
|-----------|---------|-------|
|           | ✓       | ✓     |
|           | ✗       | ✓     |
|           | ✓       | ✓     |
|           | ✓       | ✓     |
|           | ✗       | ✗     |
|           | ✓       | ✓     |
|           | ✗       | ✓     |
|           | ✓       | ✓     |
|           | ✓       | ✓     |

# Understanding Sex After Total Hip Replacement

**Sex after total hip replacement** can be a sensitive and significant topic for many individuals recovering from this surgery. As with any major medical procedure, patients often have concerns about how their sexual health and activity may change post-surgery. Understanding the implications of total hip replacement on sexual activity is essential for restoring intimacy and confidence following recovery. This article aims to provide insight into the changes that may occur, tips for safe sexual activity, and advice on

communication with partners.

# **The Impact of Total Hip Replacement on Sexual Function**

Total hip replacement surgery involves the removal of damaged bone and cartilage from the hip joint and replacing it with artificial components. While this procedure can greatly alleviate pain and improve mobility, it can also raise concerns about sexual function. Here are several factors to consider:

## **Physical Changes**

1. **Mobility Limitations:** After surgery, patients may experience temporary or long-term limitations in mobility, which can affect sexual positions and overall comfort during intimate moments.
2. **Pain Management:** Post-operative pain, swelling, and stiffness can impact sexual activity. It's essential to manage pain effectively to engage comfortably in sexual relations.
3. **Range of Motion:** The hip joint's range of motion may be altered after surgery. Certain movements may trigger discomfort or strain, making it important to explore alternative positions.

## **Emotional and Psychological Factors**

1. **Body Image Concerns:** Some individuals may struggle with changes in their body image after surgery, which can impact confidence and willingness to engage in sexual activity.
2. **Fear of Injury:** Patients may have concerns about dislocating the hip joint or causing harm during sexual activity, leading to anxiety about intimacy.
3. **Communication Barriers:** Open dialogue with partners can be challenging, especially when discussing fears, limitations, or new dynamics in the relationship.

## **When to Resume Sexual Activity**

Determining when to resume sexual activity after a total hip replacement can vary by individual and depends on several factors. Generally, it is advisable to wait until:

- **Healing is Complete:** Most doctors recommend waiting at least 6 to 8 weeks post-surgery to allow for adequate healing.

- Follow-Up Appointment: Attend your follow-up appointment to discuss your recovery progress with your healthcare provider.
- Medical Clearance: Always consult your surgeon or physical therapist for personalized advice regarding when it is safe to resume sexual activity.

## **Safe Practices for Sex After Total Hip Replacement**

Once cleared by a healthcare provider, here are some tips for safely resuming sexual activity:

### **Choosing Comfortable Positions**

Experiment with different positions to find what is most comfortable and pleasurable. Here are a few positions to consider:

1. Side-Lying (Spoon) Position: This position allows for intimate contact while minimizing strain on the hip joint.
2. Seated Positions: Sitting on a chair or edge of the bed can provide stability and control, reducing the risk of overstretching the hip.
3. Modified Missionary: With a pillow under the hips, the missionary position can be adjusted to reduce pressure on the hip.

### **Utilizing Supportive Aids**

Using pillows or cushions can provide comfort and support. Consider:

- Pillows for Height: Placing pillows under the pelvis can help adjust angles and alleviate discomfort.
- Cushions for Firmness: A firm surface can provide stability and prevent excessive movement during intimacy.

### **Communicating with Your Partner**

Open communication is crucial for a satisfying sexual experience post-surgery. Discuss:

1. Limitations: Be honest about any physical limitations or fears regarding certain movements.

2. Preferences: Share what feels good and what does not. It's essential to explore intimacy together.
3. Emotional Needs: Address any emotional concerns, such as anxiety or body image issues, to foster a supportive environment.

## **Addressing Concerns and Seeking Help**

If difficulties arise in resuming sexual activity after total hip replacement, consider the following:

### **Consulting Healthcare Professionals**

1. Physical Therapists: They can provide tailored exercises and strategies to regain strength and confidence.
2. Sexual Health Specialists: These professionals can offer guidance on navigating sexual health concerns post-surgery.
3. Counseling Services: Speaking with a counselor can help address emotional barriers impacting intimacy.

### **Educating Yourself**

Knowledge is power. Consider:

- Resources and Literature: Read books or articles about sexual health after surgery to better understand changes and adaptations.
- Support Groups: Joining a support group with others who have undergone similar experiences can provide emotional support and practical advice.

## **Conclusion**

Sex after total hip replacement is a multifaceted issue that encompasses physical, emotional, and psychological factors. While the initial recovery period may present challenges, understanding the changes and addressing concerns can significantly enhance intimacy and sexual health. By being patient, communicating openly with partners, and exploring new ways to connect, individuals can reclaim their sexual lives post-surgery. As always, it is essential to consult with healthcare professionals for personalized guidance tailored to individual needs and circumstances. With time, care, and understanding, a fulfilling sexual relationship can be restored after total hip replacement.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Is it safe to have sex after a total hip replacement?**

Yes, it is generally safe to resume sexual activities after a total hip replacement, but it's important to wait until you have fully healed and received clearance from your surgeon.

### **How long should I wait after surgery to have sex?**

Most surgeons recommend waiting at least 6 to 12 weeks post-surgery, but you should consult your healthcare provider for personalized advice.

### **What positions are safest for sex after hip replacement?**

Positions that avoid excessive hip bending and twisting are best. Side-lying positions or those where both partners remain upright may be safer.

### **Will I experience pain during sex after my hip replacement?**

Some individuals may experience discomfort or pain initially. If pain persists, it is essential to consult your healthcare provider.

### **Can I use any aids or devices to help with sex after hip replacement?**

Yes, there are various aids available, such as cushions or special positioning devices that can help make sexual activity more comfortable.

### **What should I do if I feel anxious about having sex after surgery?**

It's normal to feel anxious. Communicate with your partner, and consider discussing your concerns with a therapist or your healthcare provider.

### **Are there any specific exercises to help with sexual function post-surgery?**

Pelvic floor exercises, as well as gentle stretching and strengthening of the hip muscles, can help improve sexual function and comfort.

### **Can I have an orgasm after hip replacement surgery?**

Yes, orgasms are generally possible after surgery, but individual experiences may vary, and it might take time to adjust.

### **When should I consult my doctor regarding sexual**

## activity after hip replacement?

If you have persistent pain, swelling, or other concerns during sexual activity, it is advisable to consult your healthcare provider.

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## Sex After Total Hip Replacement

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3 days ago · Sexual health cannot be defined, understood or made operational without a broad consideration of sexuality, which underlies important behaviours and outcomes related to sexual health. The working definition of sexuality is: "...a central aspect of being human throughout life encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy ...

### **Redefining sexual health for benefits throughout life**

Feb 11, 2022 · Looking at outcomes from various initiatives, the research recommends redesigning sexual education and health interventions to incorporate sexual pleasure considerations, including when promoting safer sex. This means acknowledging the reasons why people have sex – and recognizing that sexual experiences can and should be pleasurable.

Comprehensive sexuality education

May 18, 2023 · Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) gives young people accurate, age-appropriate information about sexuality and their sexual and reproductive health, which is critical for their health and survival. While CSE programmes will be different everywhere, the United Nations' technical guidance – which was developed together by UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, ...

### **Sexual and reproductive health and rights - World Health ...**

Jun 27, 2025 · The World Health Organization defines sexual health as a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being related to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe ...

*International technical guidance on sexuality education*

Mar 14, 2018 · Comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) plays a central role in the preparation of young people for a safe, productive, fulfilling life in a world where HIV and AIDS, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), unintended pregnancies, gender-based violence (GBV) and gender inequality still pose serious risks to their well-being. However, despite clear and compelling ...

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### **Gender - World Health Organization (WHO)**

Jun 26, 2025 · Gender and sex are related to but different from gender identity. Gender identity

refers to a person's deeply felt, internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond to the person's physiology or designated sex at birth. Gender influences people's experience of and access to healthcare.

## Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)

6 days ago · Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are spread predominantly by unprotected sexual contact. Some STIs can also be transmitted during pregnancy and childbirth and through infected blood or blood products. STIs have a profound impact on health. If untreated, they can lead to serious consequences including neurological and cardiovascular disease, infertility, ...

**SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE - World Health Organization ...**

Sexual exploitation: Actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.

## Santé sexuelle - World Health Organization (WHO)

La santé sexuelle est fondamentale pour la santé et le bien-être général des personnes, des couples et des familles, ainsi que pour le développement social et économique des communautés et des pays.

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Discover how to navigate sex after total hip replacement with expert tips and advice. Enhance intimacy safely—learn more in our comprehensive guide!

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