

Sex After A 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
	✓	✓
	✗	✓
	✓	✓
	✓	✓
	✗	✗
	✓	✓
	✗	✓
	✓	✓
	✓	✓

Sex after a hip replacement can be a significant concern for many individuals who are recovering from this common orthopedic surgery. Following a hip replacement, patients often experience changes in their physical capabilities and may have questions about when and how they can safely resume sexual activity. Understanding the implications of this surgery on your sex life is essential for both emotional and physical healing. In this article, we will explore the aspects of sexual health post-hip replacement, including timing, positions, concerns, and tips for a fulfilling intimate life.

Understanding Hip Replacement Surgery

Hip replacement surgery involves replacing a damaged or worn-out hip joint with an artificial implant. This procedure is typically performed to relieve pain, improve mobility, and enhance the quality of life for individuals suffering from conditions such as arthritis or hip fractures.

Types of Hip Replacement

There are two main types of hip replacement surgeries:

1. Total Hip Replacement: This involves replacing both the femoral head (the ball) and the acetabulum (the socket).
2. Partial Hip Replacement: In this procedure, only the femoral head is replaced.

Both surgeries have different recovery timelines and considerations, which can affect sexual activity.

Timing: When Can You Resume Sexual Activity?

After hip replacement surgery, the timeline for resuming sexual activity varies from person to person. Generally, most healthcare providers recommend waiting for at least 6 to 12 weeks post-surgery before engaging in sexual activity. However, it's crucial to follow your surgeon's advice, as individual recovery rates can differ significantly.

Factors Influencing Recovery Time

Several factors can influence your recovery time and readiness for sexual activity:

- Age: Older adults may take longer to heal.
- Overall Health: Pre-existing health conditions can affect recovery.
- Type of Surgery: Total hip replacements may require a longer recovery period than partial replacements.
- Physical Therapy: Engaging in physical therapy can significantly speed up rehabilitation.

Concerns and Considerations

Many individuals may have concerns about engaging in sexual activity after hip replacement surgery. Here are some common worries:

Physical Limitations

Post-surgery, you may experience limitations in mobility and strength. This can affect your ability to assume certain positions. It's essential to communicate openly with your partner about any physical discomfort or limitations.

Risk of Dislocation

One of the primary concerns post-hip replacement is the risk of dislocating the new hip joint. While the risk is relatively low, certain movements can increase this risk. It's crucial to be aware of the following:

- Avoid crossing your legs.
- Steer clear of positions that require extreme hip flexion or rotation.
- Consult your doctor about specific movements to avoid.

Emotional Concerns

The emotional impact of recovering from surgery can also affect intimacy. You may experience anxiety, changes in body image, or apprehension about engaging in sexual activity. It's important to discuss these feelings with your partner and perhaps seek counseling if necessary.

Safe Sexual Positions After Hip Replacement

When you feel ready to resume sexual activity, choosing the right positions can make a significant difference in comfort and safety. Here are some recommended positions:

1. Side-Lying Position

Both partners lie on their sides facing each other. This position allows for closeness and intimacy while keeping the hips stable.

2. Modified Missionary Position

The receiving partner lies on their back with a pillow under their hips to elevate them slightly. The penetrating partner can kneel or stand, but they should avoid deep thrusting.

3. Seated Position

Both partners can sit on a sturdy chair or edge of the bed, allowing for intimacy without putting too much pressure on the hips.

4. Edge of the Bed Position

One partner sits on the edge of the bed while the other stands or kneels in front. This position maintains a safer angle for the hips.

Tips for a Fulfilling Sex Life after Hip Replacement

Resuming a fulfilling sexual life after hip replacement surgery is possible with some adjustments and considerations. Here are some tips to facilitate a satisfying experience:

- **Communicate Openly:** Discuss your feelings, fears, and limitations with your partner. Open communication is key to a satisfying sexual relationship.
- **Take It Slow:** Gradually ease back into sexual activity. Start with gentle touches and caresses before progressing to more intimate acts.
- **Focus on Intimacy:** Explore non-penetrative sexual activities such as kissing, touching, and oral sex, which can enhance intimacy without putting strain on the hips.
- **Use Pillows for Support:** Pillows can provide additional support and comfort, helping to alleviate pressure on the hips during sexual activity.
- **Consult Your Doctor:** Always check with your surgeon or physical therapist for personalized advice on resuming sexual activity.

Conclusion

In summary, **sex after a hip replacement** is a topic that requires open communication, understanding, and a willingness to adapt. With the right approach, individuals can enjoy a fulfilling sexual life even after undergoing significant surgery. By following medical advice, considering safe positions, and prioritizing emotional intimacy, you can navigate this new chapter in your life with confidence and satisfaction. Remember, every recovery is unique, and listening to your body, along with professional guidance, is crucial for a successful transition back to intimacy.

Frequently Asked Questions

How soon can I resume sexual activity after a hip replacement?

Most doctors recommend waiting at least 6 to 12 weeks after surgery, but it's important to consult with your surgeon for personalized advice based on your recovery.

Are there specific positions that are safer for sex after a hip replacement?

Yes, it's advisable to choose positions that minimize strain on the hip joint, such as side-lying or using pillows for support. Avoid deep hip flexion and twisting movements.

Will I experience pain during sex after my hip replacement?

Some individuals may experience discomfort or pain, especially during the early stages of recovery. Communicating with your partner and taking things slowly can help.

Can I use sexual aids or toys after a hip replacement?

Yes, using sexual aids or toys can be safe, but it's important to start with gentle options and ensure they do not place excessive strain on the hip.

How can I communicate my needs to my partner regarding sex after surgery?

Open communication is key. Discuss your feelings, any fears you may have, and what is comfortable for you. This will help both partners feel more at ease.

Are there any long-term changes to my sexual function after hip replacement?

While many people return to their pre-surgery levels of sexual activity, some may experience changes due to physical limitations or discomfort. It's important to stay in close contact with your healthcare provider.

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