

# SuperPATH Hip Joint Replacement

## What to expect and how to care for yourself after surgery

Thank you for trusting us with your care. Our goal is to provide the highest level of care and service before and after your surgery. The following information will help you know what to expect and how to care for yourself after SuperPATH hip joint replacement surgery. If you have any questions, a surgeon is available 24 hours a day at **952-831-8742**.

### What can I expect after SuperPATH hip joint replacement surgery?

SuperPATH surgery is a less invasive way to replace your hip joint, but you're still having major surgery. As with any surgery, complications can occur. Keep the following in mind as you recover:

- Expect your recovery to take several weeks. Give your body the time needed to heal for the best results following your surgery.
- Don't push yourself too hard after surgery. Since your recovery will be faster than recovery from traditional hip joint replacement surgery, you may want to do too much too soon. But if you overdo it, you'll have more pain and a slower recovery.
- The longer you've had problems with your hip, the longer you'll need to recover normal joint movement. Because changes happen gradually, many people don't realize just how stiff and weak their hip muscles and other tissue are. It takes time to stretch and strengthen these muscles and tissue after surgery.

### How do I manage my pain?

Most people have only mild to moderate pain after SuperPATH hip joint replacement surgery. This pain is usually around your incisions and buttock.

Pain medication, ice and physical therapy will help manage your pain while you recover. If these treatments don't manage your pain, call your surgeon (see "Phone number" on Page 4).

### Pain medication

We help you manage your pain with several medications. Typically these medications include:

- Oxycodone, an opioid pain medication
- Gabapentin (Neurontin), a medication to treat nerve pain—You usually take this medication at night since it can make you sleepy. If it doesn't make you too sleepy, you can take this medication up to 3 times a day.
- Acetaminophen (Tylenol)
- Ibuprofen (Advil) or naproxen (Aleve)—Talk with your surgeon about whether it's OK to take these medications after surgery.

Before going home, we'll give you instructions for taking your pain medications. Follow those instructions exactly. Most people find they no longer need these medications about 2 weeks after surgery.

### Ice

Applying an ice pack to your hip can help reduce pain. To avoid frostbite:

- Place a towel or cloth between your skin and the ice pack. Don't put ice directly on your skin.
- Use the ice pack for 20 minutes, followed by no ice for 20 minutes. Repeat as needed.

## Physical therapy

After going home from the hospital, you'll have 6 physical therapy visits. At these visits you'll learn exercises to:

- Strengthen the muscles around your hip.
- Prevent you from having pain in your groin and outer part of your hip. (People who are too active too soon after surgery often have pain in these areas.)
- Help you get back normal hip movement sooner.

**Note:** You'll receive a care guide when you schedule your surgery. The guide includes some exercises you should **not** do. We'll tell you which exercises not to do.

## How do I care for my incisions?

After surgery, you'll have 2 incisions—1 short incision and 1 longer incision. Both incisions will be closed with absorbable sutures (stitches that don't need to be removed) under your skin.

### The first week following surgery

A special bandage that helps prevent infection will cover your incisions. Leave this bandage in place for at least one week. We'll remove the bandage at your first follow-up appointment.

### After the first week following surgery

You can leave your incision uncovered, as long as your doctor says it's OK.

- The skin around your incision may have a slight red tinge. This is likely deep bruising and not a reason to be concerned.
  - » If you have significant redness around your incision, call your surgeon.

If you take anticoagulant or antiplatelet medication (pills or injections), you may have bruising around your incision and buttock.

## What about bathing?

- You can shower after surgery, but leave your bandage in place.
- Don't soak in a bathtub, hot tub or pool until after your follow-up visit.

## What are my restrictions?

### Position restrictions

After surgery, you can place your hip in any comfortable position. The tendons and other soft tissues around your hip will be stiff from not moving well for a number of years, so some positions will likely be difficult for you at first.

Focus on stretching these tight tissues as your physical therapist instructs. The tightest areas will be your groin and inner thigh.

### Driving

- Wait to drive until after your first follow-up appointment with your surgeon.
- Don't drive while taking prescription pain medication.
- If your surgery was on your right hip, start by using your left foot to brake. Then try using your right foot to brake when you feel comfortable.

## What about activity?

- Use a walking aid, such as a walker, crutches or cane, for at least 2 weeks after surgery.
  - » Most people no longer need a walking aid 2 to 4 weeks after surgery.
  - » Some people need a walking aid for as long as 6 weeks after surgery.
- The stronger you are before surgery, the less time you'll need a walking aid.
- Remember, don't push yourself too quickly or you'll likely have more pain and a slower recovery.

## Recommended activities

After you've recovered from surgery, recommended activities include:

- Outdoor activities, such as golfing, hiking, bicycling, cross-country skiing, walking (indoor mall walking as well)
- Dancing, bowling, doubles tennis
- Swimming
- Low-impact aerobics
- Use of fitness equipment, such as a treadmill or stair-stepper, or rowing, elliptical and weight machines

Recommended activities that are more physically demanding include:

- Downhill skiing, snowboarding, ice skating
- Doubles racquetball
- Softball
- In-line skating
- Martial arts

## Activities to avoid

The following activities are likely to shorten the life of your hip implant—These activities are **not** recommended:

- Jogging
- Singles tennis
- High-impact aerobics
- Contact sports

## Sexual activity

You may resume sex about 4 to 6 weeks after surgery, when your incisions and muscles around your joint are healed. The exact time varies for each person.

## Taking antibiotics to prevent infections

Your implant is made of metal and plastic. These materials make it harder for your body to fight bacteria around your implant if an infection from one part of your body spreads to your implant.

Having dental work may increase the risk for an infection. To reduce this risk, do **not** go to the dentist for 6 months after surgery.

In addition, some people will need to take antibiotics before going to the dentist. If you have or have had any of the following, you'll need to take antibiotics before having dental work:

- Diabetes (even if you don't take medication to manage your diabetes) or prediabetes
- Rheumatoid arthritis, lupus and other autoimmune diseases
- Other immune system-related diseases, such as inflammatory bowel disease (Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis) or HIV
- Cancer (except for simple skin cancers)
- Severe scarring in or around your replaced joint
- Radiation treatment to your replaced joint
- Previous infection of your replaced joint

If none of the above applies to you, you do **not** need to take antibiotics before dental procedures.

These guidelines are based on current recommendations from the medical community. The guidelines may change in the future as more research is done.

**Note:** Taking antibiotics before a colonoscopy is **not** necessary after joint replacement.

## When do I call my surgeon?

Call Dr. Dean Olsen if you have any questions or concerns about your surgery (see "Phone number").

Also call Dr. Olsen if you have:

- A fever of 101°F (38°C) or higher.
- Increased redness, heat (feels warm to the touch), swelling or cloudy drainage (pus) around or from your incision.
- Any drainage from your incision 5 days after surgery or later.

## Phone number

### TRIA Orthopedics

Available 24 hours a day  
952-831-8742

If you call after office hours, you'll be transferred to an operator. Tell the operator you're a patient and ask to speak to the on-call surgeon. A surgeon will call you back.

## We welcome your feedback

Do you have suggestions for how we could improve your experience or the experience of others having hip replacement surgery? Let Dr. Olsen know at one of your follow-up visits or by calling **952-831-8742**.

