

Hip Replacement: Week-by-Week Guide

A printable week-by-week guide to hip replacement recovery - hospital day, the first weeks, strength milestones and when to return to activity.

At a Glance

- You will walk on the new hip within a day - early movement is the goal
- Expect swelling for weeks and mild swelling for months; elevate and ice
- Follow your surgeon's movement and position restrictions exactly
- Strength and stamina take months - this is a marathon, not a sprint

The First Weeks

Day 0-1 (hospital):

- Sit up and stand with support
- Walk short distances with a walker
- Begin breathing and ankle exercises

Week 1-2:

- Walk with a walker several times a day
- Sleep with a pillow between your knees
- Follow wound care and any position restrictions

Week 2-6:

- Progress from walker to cane as strength improves
- Do your physiotherapy exercises daily
- Expect swelling that comes and goes

Months 2-6

- Walk without aids when cleared; drive when your surgeon allows
- Build strength with clamshells, hip hinges and glute bridges
- Return to desk work and low-impact activity (walking, cycling, swimming)
- Report any sudden pain, wound redness, fever or severe calf swelling

Do This

- Move early and often within your restrictions
- Keep pain controlled so you can move
- Elevate and ice for swelling
- Follow the hip loading principles

Avoid This

- Twisting the hip or crossing the legs if restricted
- Lying still for long periods

- Pushing through sharp pain or ignoring new symptoms
- Returning to heavy work or sport without clearance

When to See Someone

Contact your care team urgently for fever, a red or leaking wound, severe calf pain or swelling, sudden shortness of breath, or a hip that looks out of place.

References

1. AAOS OrthoInfo. "Activities After Total Hip Replacement."
<https://orthoinfo.aaos.org/en/recovery/activities-after-hip-replacement/>
2. AAOS OrthoInfo. "Total Joint Replacement." <https://www.orthoinfo.org/treatment/total-joint-replacement/>

***This information is for education only and is not a medical diagnosis.** InjuryAtlas does not replace an assessment by a qualified health professional. Always follow your surgeon's specific protocol after surgery.*