

Hip Replacement

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The hip is one of the body's largest joint; There are many conditions that may result in having total hip replacement or hip arthroplasty. There are three common causes of chronic hip pain:

- **Arthritis:** chronic, inflammatory disease that causes joint pain, stiffness and swelling
- **Osteoarthritis:** loss of bone caused by insufficient blood supply, injury and bone tumors
- **Rheumatoid arthritis:** chronic inflammatory disease that causes joint pain, stiffness and swelling

Before hip replacement surgery, people are encouraged to use other treatments such as using walking aids or non-surgical therapies – medication or physical therapy – will be administered. If there is still no relief, hip replacement surgery is usually the best option. The client's physician can confirm joint damage with an x-ray.

Source: <http://www.webmd.com/arthritis/about-hip-replacement#1> (accessed 8/2/16)

During a hip replacement surgery, a surgeon removes the damaged sections of the hip joint and replaces it with metal and very hard plastic.

Reasons why a hip can be replaced

- Pain persists, despite pain medication
- Worsens with walking, even with a cane or walker
- Interferes with the client's sleep
- Affects the client's ability use the stairs
- Difficult to rise from a seated position

Hip Replacement Risks

- **Blood clots:** can form in the leg veins after surgery. This can be dangerous because a piece of the clot can break off and travel to the lungs, heart or in some rare cases to the brain. The client's doctor may prescribe blood-thinning medications to reduce this risk.
- **Infections:** can occur at the site of the incision and in the deeper tissue near the new hip. Most infections are treated with antibiotics, but a major infection near the prosthesis may require surgery to remove and replace it.
- **Fracture:** during surgery, healthy portions of the hip joint may fracture. Sometimes the fractures are so small they heal on their own, but larger fractures may need to be corrected with wires, pins and possibly bone grafts.



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Hip Replacement

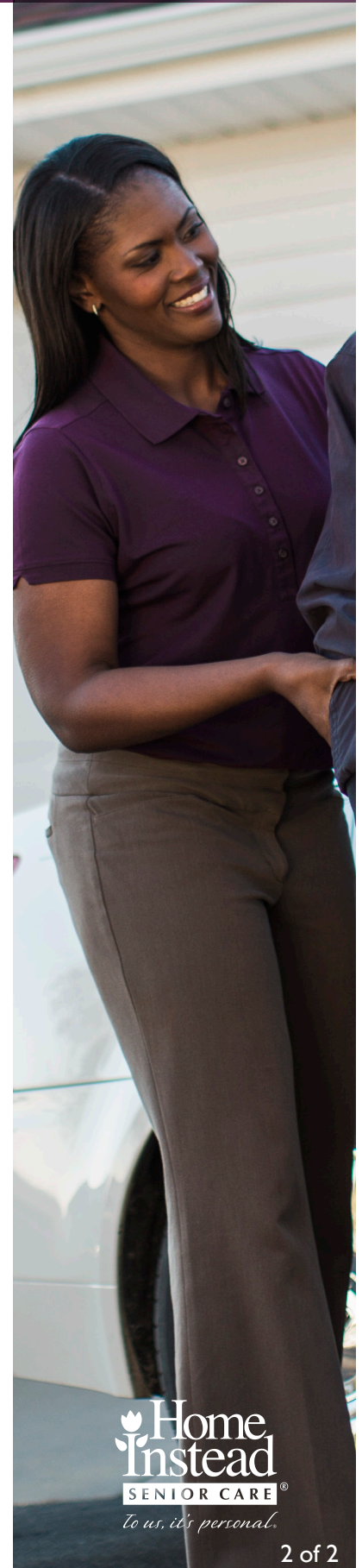
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- **Dislocation:** certain positions can cause the ball of the new joint to become dislodged. To avoid this, the client shouldn't bend more than 90 degrees at the hip and should not let their legs cross the midline of their body. If the hip dislocates, the client's doctor may fit the client with a brace to keep the hip in the correct position. If it keeps dislocating, surgery is often required to stabilize it.
- **Change in leg length:** the surgeon takes steps to avoid the problem, but occasionally a new hip makes one leg longer or shorter than the other. Sometimes this is caused by weakness in the muscles surrounding the hip. In this case, progressively strengthening and stretching those muscles may help.
- **Loosening:** although this complication is rare with newer implants, the new joint may not become solidly fixed to the bone or may loosen over time, causing pain in the hip. Surgery might be needed to fix the problem.

Source: <http://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/hip-replacement-surgery/basics/risks/prc-20019151>
(Accessed 06.21.16)

Role of a CAREGiverSM

- Follow the instructions from the client's physician regarding treatment and physical activity.
- Encourage the client to exercises as prescribed by her physical therapist.
- Assist the client with daily activities. The client should limit using the stairs.
- Encourage the client to sit in a firm, straight-back chair. Recliners should not be used.
- Help to provide a safe environment. If possible, remove all throw rugs and keep floors and rooms clutter free. Check the house for loose handrails or grab bars. If you have modification recommendations, call the franchise office.
- Encourage the client to use an elevated toilet seat. This prevents the client from bending too far at the hips.
- Keep jumpy pets away until the client is fully healed.
- Recognize, report and record. Be the eyes and ears for the client in the home. If you notice any changes or have concerns, contact the franchise office as soon as possible.



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