



Physiotherapy Department

Post hip replacement symptom checker



It is important you know what **normal** post operative symptoms are and what the symptoms are of **post operative complications**.

This booklet will cover how to manage normal post operative symptoms and what to do if you are showing signs of post operative complications to help support your recovery.

Normal post operative symptoms

Following a total hip replacement it is normal to experience:

1

Pain

Around the operated hip and leg including groin, buttock, thigh and calf. This may take several weeks to improve. Take regular pain relief to keep pain score 1 or below as you get moving. *Score: 0=none 1=mild 2=moderate 3=severe*

2

Swelling

You may have swelling of the operated leg this may take a couple of months to settle – this can be managed with regular ice, elevation and by keeping active.

3

Bruising

This can look worse than it is, bruising may be to the whole leg or track down the operated leg – this should settle within a few weeks on its own.

4

Inflammation

Mild redness, heat and wound ooze is part of the healing process following surgery. It should settle within a few weeks. Ice and anti-inflammatories can help. If symptoms don't settle, please call the Elective Orthopaedic Unit for further advice on **01305 255562**.

5

Weakness

It takes a few months to build muscle strength and confidence in your operated leg, ensure you are keeping active by completing your exercises and mobilising throughout the day.

Symptoms of post operative complications

Although uncommon post operative complications can occur. Please ensure you are aware of the following symptoms:

1

Infection

If you have a fever or flu symptoms and redness around the wound, it's important to ring the Elective Orthopaedic Unit for advice – we would want a medical review quickly to check for wound/joint infection.

2

Deep vein thrombosis (DVT)

DVT is a blood clot in your leg veins. If you have swelling in one leg/calf, throbbing leg/calf pain, warmth, redness/darkening of skin or swollen veins tender touch please call the Elective Orthopaedic Unit for advice – we would want you to be assessed and start treatment quickly.

3

Pulmonary Embolism (PE)

PE is a blood clot in an artery in the lungs and needs emergency treatment. Symptoms are the same as for a DVT with the addition of breathlessness, chest pain, increased or irregular heart rate or dizziness. **Please call 999** for medical input if you experience these symptoms.

4

Joint dislocation

Acute groin or thigh pain, reduced/inability to weight bear on operated leg. This may result from a trauma or bending/twisting movement. **Please call 999** for support if you have dislocated your hip, you will need medical input to relocate your hip.

5

Fracture and nerve injuries

Other recognised complications include fractures and nerve injuries both of which are fortunately rare. Call the Elective Orthopaedic Unit for any other concerns.

Recovery timeline:

Bone healing on average is **6-8 weeks**. **Soft tissue healing** can take **6-12 weeks**. You may still feel post operative symptoms beyond this, but we would expect symptoms to be improving within this timescale.

If you experience continued discomfort after your surgery please contact:

The **Elective Orthopaedic Unit** on **01305 255562**.

You should expect your recovery to feel as follows:

3 months to be FAIR

6 months to be GOOD

12 months to be RIGHT

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