



Next Step Newsletter

Next Step
Physical Therapy
(516) 681- 8070

May 2011

Giving you information and answers to any physical therapy, health or fitness related questions

Interesting and practical information about hip replacements.

This month's article talks about some of the new research behind total hip replacements. So if you are considering one, or know of someone who is, please take a look and pass it on. If not, read it anyway, it's an easy read and you might find it interesting. I hope everyone is getting ready for a wonderful summer!

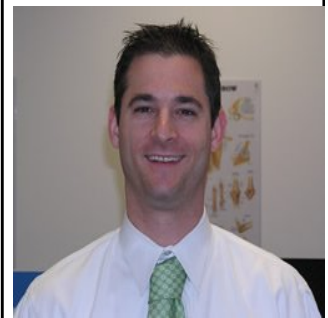
We would like to thank the following people for referring us patients: Pat Londner, Donna Graziouse, Christine D'Aquila, Betty Leyser, and the Reardon, Platania, and Toomey Families.

What's going on this Month?

These are exciting times at Next Step Physical Therapy. We look forward to hosting our next physical therapy student in about a month. He's from my school, Washington University in St Louis, and the faculty tell me he's excellent. In addition, we will be having our first physical therapist come train to get his fellowship in movement science (we are the only site in the eastern region of the country to offer it). He practices in Virginia Beach but he was originally from Long Island. We hope to have some more exciting staff news in the near future as well...stay tuned!

Updates

Welcome to the Next Step Newsletter!



- If you have a friend or family member that you think could use our help please let us know or have them call us.
- If you would like more information on any of the topics discussed here please give us a call.
- If you have a question that you would like to have answered (maybe in the next newsletter) please don't hesitate to call.
- What topics are you interested in and would like to see in the newsletter? Let us know.

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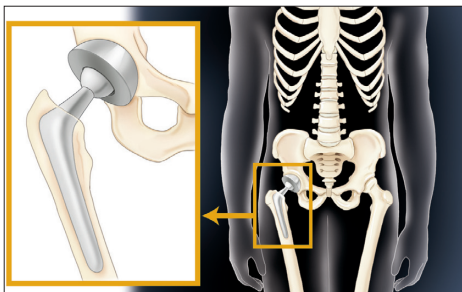
Total Hip Replacement

How Long Does It Take to Recover?

J Orthop Sports Phys Ther 2011;41(4):240. doi:10.2519/jospt.2011.0502

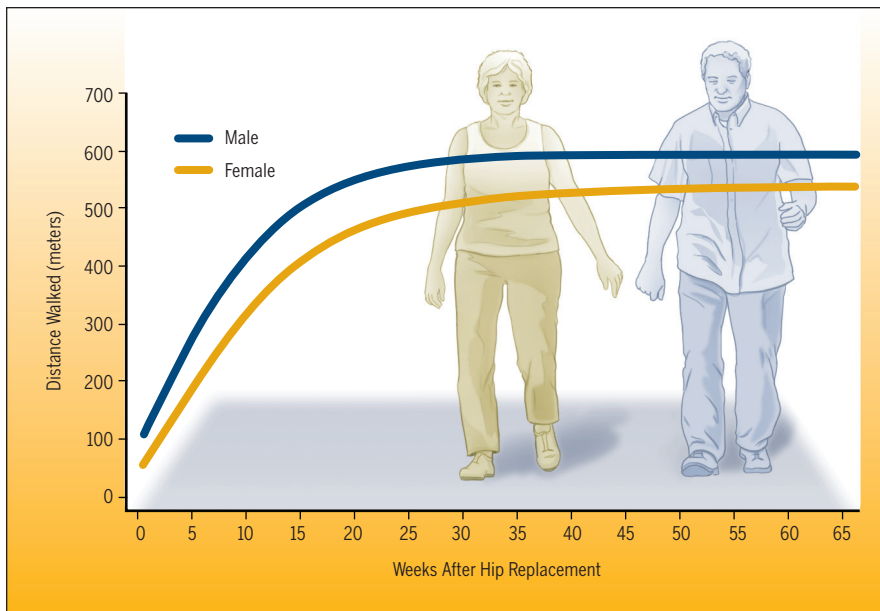
ARE YOU CONSIDERING A HIP REPLACEMENT? IF SO, you probably have been suffering from hip pain that makes daily activities difficult. If physical therapy, walking aids (cane or walker), or medications have not helped decrease your pain or improve your ability to get around, you and your orthopaedic surgeon may be discussing a hip replacement (see illustration below). Each year, about 200 000 patients decide to have a hip replacement. An important factor to

consider is the recovery process following surgery. Researchers have found that most patients have decreased pain and improved ability to perform their daily activities after a hip replacement. However, what remains unknown is how long it takes to recover. In its April 2011 issue, *JOSPT* published a research study providing new evidence that can help you understand the time needed to recover after this surgery and how soon you will be able to walk more easily.



HIP REPLACEMENT. A hip replacement may be considered if you have difficulty with daily activities, such as walking or going up and down stairs, and your hip pain does not improve with physical therapy, walking aids (cane or walker), or medications.

EVALUATING YOUR RECOVERY. Rapid recovery typically occurs in the first 12 to 15 weeks. However, you can expect to have continued improvements for the first year. The graph below shows the recovery time for men and women, based on the distance they are able to walk in 6 minutes.



NEW INSIGHTS

In this study, 65 patients (average age, 61 years) were followed for up to 65 weeks after a total hip replacement. The study determined whether people had recovered by measuring how far they could walk in 6 minutes and using what they reported about their problems in doing daily activities. Both measures were taken prior to surgery and at several points during the recovery process. The researchers found that most patients had a rapid recovery during the first 3 to 4 months after surgery, but improvements then continued at a slower rate for up to a year. These findings are important, because, if you do not see rapid improvement in the first 3 to 4 months after surgery or if you stop making progress during the first year, you may benefit from an evaluation to determine if additional exercises or other forms of rehabilitation would help your recovery.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

Improvements in strength, balance, and coordination after a hip replacement are needed to help patients return to their daily activities and decrease their risk for falls. Researchers have previously shown that hip strength and muscle weakness persist up to 2 years after surgery. Based on the rapid recovery in the first 3 to 4 months, some patients may stop doing their exercises, which may limit their recovery and place them at risk for falls. On the flip side, some patients may be frustrated if they are not getting better faster. The recovery chart (left) can help you check your progress, set goals for your recovery, and begin to answer the question "How am I doing compared to others?" For more information on rehabilitation following a hip replacement, contact your physical therapist specializing in musculoskeletal disorders.

For this and more topics, visit *JOSPT Perspectives for Patients* online at www.jospt.org.

This *JOSPT Perspectives for Patients* is based on an article by Kennedy DM et al, titled "Using Outcome Measure Results to Facilitate Clinical Decisions the First Year After Total Hip Arthroplasty" (*J Orthop Sports Phys Ther* 2011;41(4):232-239. doi:10.2519/jospt.2011.3516).

This Perspectives article was written by a team of *JOSPT's* Editorial board and staff, with **Deydre S. Teyhen**, PT, PhD, Editor, and **Jeanne Robertson**, Illustrator.



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