

Understanding Osteoarthritis and Rapid Recovery Minimally Invasive Hip Replacement

Joint deterioration can affect every aspect of a person's life. In its early stages, it is common for people to ignore the symptoms of osteoarthritis, but as the disease progresses, activities like walking, driving, and standing become challenging, painful, and more difficult.

The following information will help you understand some of the basics of anatomy, arthritis, and Rapid Recovery minimally invasive hip replacement surgery.

The Hip is a ball-and-socket joint that allows the leg to move in a variety of positions. The joint is lined with a lubricating tissue called cartilage, which acts as a cushion as the joint moves and bears weight. Osteoarthritis is a wear and tear condition that destroys joint cartilage, and it develops over years of constant motion and pressure in the joints. As the cartilage continues to wear away, the joint becomes increasingly painful and difficult to move. Unfortunately, cartilage does not have the ability to repair or replace itself like other tissues in the body. Once the cartilage is damaged or destroyed, it's gone for good. It is at this point that a surgeon may recommend total hip replacement.

Hip replacement surgery can be an extremely successful surgical procedure. The first total hip replacement surgery was performed over 40 years ago, and since then, millions of people have received hip replacements. Hip replacement surgery has become a fairly common procedure with nearly 300,000 being performed every year in the United States alone. Hip replacement surgery, or arthroplasty, uses implants to resurface and replace the bones in the joint re-creating the smooth gliding surfaces that were once intact. Total hip implants are typically made from a metal alloy such as titanium or cobalt chromium and medical-grade polyethylene, a durable plastic.

Rapid Recovery Minimally Invasive Total Hip Replacement

The field of orthopedics is constantly researching new techniques to help make joint replacement surgery less painful and to help patients recover more quickly. One of the most talked about orthopedic advancements is minimally invasive joint replacement, also called mini-incision joint replacement.

Traditional total hip replacements require an incision between eight and ten inches long. The patient's size and the extent of the joint's damage can sometimes determine the length of the incision. The incision allows the surgeon to fully visualize the joint, the diseased bone, and the implants.

Minimally invasive total hip replacement is performed through an approximately two to four inch incision, half to one-third the length of a typical hip replacement incision. Surgeons can perform surgery through such a short incision because they use instruments specifically designed for minimally invasive hip replacement.

It is important to remember that surgeons still use the clinically proven implants that they feel will best treat your specific condition.

Why Are Surgeons Performing Rapid Recovery Minimally Invasive Hip Replacement? For patients who are candidates for the procedure, the answer is simple. Today's implants offer exceptional outcomes, but traditional surgical techniques require a long and involved physical recovery. Surgeons understand that patients desire to quickly return to a more active and enjoyable lifestyle.

In addition to a shorter incision, surgeons using the Rapid Recovery Program have implemented a highly organized treatment plan for their patients' physical and mental health.

Rapid Recovery patients are educated with a variety of materials. The comprehensive educational materials will help patients understand the surgical procedure and its outcomes.

Rapid Recovery patients begin preoperative strengthening exercises to help them prepare for surgery and their recovery. Patients may be given a comprehensive nutrition plan to help ensure maximum health before surgery.

Rapid Recovery surgeons may also implement a unique pain program during surgery that is designed to dramatically reduce a patient's postoperative pain. Reducing patients' postoperative pain is critical to helping them begin their postoperative rehabilitation and to helping them make a Rapid Recovery.

Complications

While uncommon, complications can occur during and after surgery. Some complications include infection, blood clots, implant breakage, misalignment, dislocation, and premature wear. Although implant surgery is extremely successful in most cases, some patients still experience pain and stiffness. No implant will last forever, and factors such as the patient's post-surgical activities and weight can affect longevity. Be sure to discuss these and other risks with your surgeon.

There are many things that your surgeon may do to minimize the potential for complications. Your surgeon may have you see a medical physician before surgery to obtain tests. You may also need to have your

dental work up to date and may be shown how to prepare your home to avoid falls.

After Surgery

After surgery, you probably will be hospitalized for two to three days. During this time, you will receive pain medication and begin therapy for your hip. It is important to start moving your new hip as soon as possible after surgery to promote blood flow, to regain motion, and to facilitate the recovery process. You should be out of bed and walking with crutches or a walker within 24 hours of your surgery. You will be assisted in and out of bed, and you will use support devices such as a cane while you are walking.

You will also be shown how to safely climb and descend stairs, how to get into and out of a seated position, and how to care for your hip once you return home. It is a good idea to enlist the aid of friends or family to help you once you do return home.

Before you leave the hospital, your therapist will show you a variety of exercises designed to help you regain mobility and strength in your hip. You should be able to perform these exercises on your own at home. When at home, it is important to continue with your exercises as your physician has instructed.

Rapid Recovery

Rapid Recovery after minimally invasive hip replacement lasts approximately half as long as traditional total hip replacement. However, every person's recovery time will vary. Most people should be able to drive after two weeks, garden after three to four weeks, and golf about six to eight weeks after surgery. Your surgeon will tell you when you can return to these activities and will also tell you which activities to avoid.

You will typically not be allowed to participate in high-impact activities or contact sports. These types of activities place extreme pressure on the joints, which could lead to complications.

Summary

We know that decision to have surgery is sometimes difficult. We hope this article has helped you understand some of the basics of minimally invasive hip replacement surgery so that you can make the best decision for yourself. If you have any further questions, please speak with your orthopedic surgeon.