

## MAINE MEDICAL PARTNERS – ORTHOPEDICS

### Division of Joint Replacements

A department of Maine Medical Center

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## POSTERIOR TOTAL HIP REPLACEMENT AND REVISIONS MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### 1. What equipment will I need at home after my surgery and how do I get it?

- a. Crutches or walker – possibly both.
- b. Cane.
- c. Raised commode (*to put over your toilet because a regular toilet seat height is too low to sit on*).
- d. Shower/tub chair (*so that you can sit while you shower/bathe*).
- e. Extended shoehorn (*to assist in putting on your shoes*).
- f. Long-handled grabber (*to help reach things on the floor or in high places*).
- g. Hip chair (*an elevated chair to help prevent you from bending greater than 90 degrees at the hip joint*).
- h. Sock aid (*to assist in putting on your socks*).
- i. Elastic shoelaces (*so that you do not have to bend down to tie your shoes*).
- j. Long-handled sponge for bathing.

You may receive a phone call from the Care Coordinator at Maine Medical Center. They will discuss with you what your plans are for after surgery. Most patients (70%) go home and have home health nursing and physical therapy. For those who have many medical problems or little support at home a skilled nursing facility is another option. They also will discuss with you what equipment you have available to you and what you will need. They will then assist in obtaining the necessary equipment for you.

### 2. When do my staples get removed?

Staples are removed approximately ten days from your surgery date.

- a. If you go to a skilled nursing facility from the hospital, the staples will be removed at the facility.
- b. If you go home from the hospital and have home health care, you may have your staples removed by the home health nurse (this is often the case with patients who live a distance away).
- c. If you go home from the hospital and live locally, you will have an 8-10 days post op appointment at the office to have staples removed and possibly an x-ray.

### 3. How long must I wear the white TED stockings?

TED stockings must be worn for two weeks from the surgery date.

- a. They need to be worn during the day and may be removed at nighttime as long as they are put back on when you wake in the morning. If there is no swelling after the two weeks are up, you may discontinue wearing the TED stockings.
- b. If there is still swelling after the two weeks, continue wearing the stockings during the day until the swelling is gone. To reduce swelling, lie flat three times a day for 30 minutes. Elevate the left on two or three pillows.

### 4. What are hip precautions?

- a. Do not cross your legs at the knees. Ok to cross at ankles with knees rolled out.
- b. Do not twist your body at the waist.
- c. Do not turn operative foot inward.
- d. Do not flex your hip greater than 90°
- e. Do not bend at the waist
- f. Minimize lifting to no more than 20 pounds in the first three months and 40 pounds thereafter.

- g. Keep pillows between legs when sleeping.
- h. Sit only 30-45 minutes at a time.
- i. May ride in a car, stopping every 30 minutes to get out and stretch for 5-10 minutes.
- j. May sleep on operative side two weeks after surgery with a pillow between your legs.

**5. How long must I maintain hip precautions?**

Complete hip precautions must be maintained for six weeks following surgery. After that, an abbreviated set of precautions is observed.

**6. When may I drive?**

Driving usually resumes at four weeks after surgery. This will be discussed at the four week recheck appointment.

**7. May I swim?**

Swimming may resume at four weeks after surgery. Use care getting in and out of the water you must maintain strict precautions until 6 weeks after surgery. This will be discussed at the four week recheck appointment.

**8. When may I fly in an airplane?**

Flying may resume at two months. You must sit in an aisle seat, and make arrangements for luggage and connections. Blood clots are a concern so you **MUST** do ankle pumps every 15 minutes, walk about the plane every 30 minutes, and be taking aspirin or warfarin (Coumadin).

**9. When may I take a shower?**

Showering may resume after discharge from the hospital. The wound must be covered with plastic wrap to keep water from the incision. Recommend sponge bathing

**10. How long will I be out of work?**

You may usually return to work approximately four to eight week after surgery. If you have a sedentary job, you might be able to return sooner. Limitations and precautions in the workplace will be discussed prior to your return.

**11. When may I resume sexual activity?**

Sexual activity may resume at four weeks after surgery, but please read the handout entitled "Sex After Total Joint Replacement".

**12. How long after surgery will I need to have antibiotic prophylaxis prior to dental work?**

This will be done for a minimum of two years after your surgery. If you or your dentist has any questions about this somewhat controversial topic, please see our "letter to area dentists." This can be obtained by asking our office.

WE ASK THAT YOU DO NOT HAVE ANY DENTAL WORK FOR THE FIRST TEN WEEKS FOLLOWING YOUR HIP SURGERY.

**13. Do I need to donate my own blood (autologous) for surgery?**

Although commonly done in the past, it is now rarely necessary to donate your own blood prior to surgery. Blood transfusions are rare after total hip replacement (10%), and if blood is needed, the MMC blood bank can provide safe blood that has been tested for both HIV and hepatitis virus. If you have known anemia, discuss with surgeon before surgery.